SOME THOUGHTS ON CATHOLIC APOLOGETICS

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A PLEA FOR INTERPRETATION

ROEHAMPTON:
PRINTED BY JOHN GRIFFIN.

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A PLEA FOR INTERPRETATION

BY
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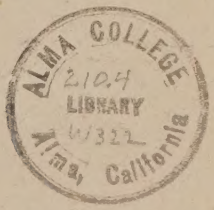

ST. LOUIS, MO.:
B. HERDER, PUBLISHER
17, S. BROADWAY

LONDON:
MANRESA PRESS
ROEHAMPTON, S.W.

1915

20313

Nihil Obstat:

ST. GEORGE KIERAN HYLAND, S.T.D.,
CENSOR DEPUTATUS

Imprimatur:

✠ PETRUS, EPŪS. SOUTHWARC.

Dedication

SANCTAE MARIAE SEDI SAPIENTIAE HAERESIUMQUE OMNIUM DEBELLATRICI HAS OPERIS MEI, SI IPSA VELIT, PRIMITIAS OFFERO EJUSQUE PATROCINIO ME IPSUM SCRIPTAQUE MEA COMMITTO.

PREFACE

THE purpose of the following pages is simple. To non-Catholics the author would say: Do listen to what Catholics have to say for their creed. To Catholics he would say: Do speak so that non-Catholics can and will listen.

My debts to books I have tried to acknowledge in the work itself. Greater perhaps are my debts to the spoken word—to fruitful conversations in which what Latham calls "seed-thoughts" were sown in my mind to bear what fruit they might in this essay. How shall I acknowledge these? All I can do is to express here my indebtedness and gratitude to Fr. Joseph Rickaby, to Mgr. Barnes, to Fr. Mather, to Christopher Dawson, and to any other friend whose thought is here reflected.

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SECTION I.

Need and Place of a General Outlook.

WELLNIGH a century has now passed since Newman began his lifework in the cause of Christian apologetic. He entered upon this work, not merely to meet the pressure of immediate controversy, but with the deliberate purpose of combating the growing infidelity of his age. He took a general survey of the present condition and future prospects of Christian apologetic. Such a general outlook over the state of affairs, both in one's own camp and in that of the enemy, is surely as necessary for the apologist in his warfare with unbelief, as for the military commander in his material warfare. Unless the apologist possesses this general view of the intellectual conditions and the spiritual needs of his time, and of the main lines on which Christian apologetic should proceed in view of those special conditions and needs, his more detailed work is most likely to miss its aim. Such a survey is, moreover, just as necessary for the least among apologetic writers, as for the great masters of Christian thought. The present writer, therefore, who has ever had great interest in apologetics, and hopes, if God so grant, to contribute his mite of work and thought to the cause of Christian defence, trusts that it will be deemed no impertinence on his part if here he offer a few cursory reflections on the condition, requirements and prospects of Catholic apologetics, as they are at this present time. He desires to point out a few of the main lines along which, in his belief, good apologetic work

can be done. He would glance at the present tendencies of thought, and on the needs, both intellectual and spiritual, which seem most marked to-day, and to which the apologist must appeal if he is to have any hope of success.

SECTION II.

Flood of Infidelity in the Immediate Past. Signs of Better Things to Come.

I BEGAN by remarking that Newman almost a century ago foresaw a great triumph for infidelity in the near future. His sad prognostications have been more than fulfilled. The last century witnessed such an overwhelming victory of unbelief, that to-day we can hardly speak any more of Christendom. Many of the European governments are openly hostile to the religion of Christ, while those states that do not oppose Christianity, do little more than tolerate it, or at most support its outward worship. No state is in the strict sense a Christian state, since there is scarce a state in which the law of the land is not in open contradiction with the law of Christ (at least as regards divorce), and no state where the government must be wholly in the hands of Catholics, or, in non-Catholic countries, of members of the Established Church of that land. The test in England is for the King alone, now no longer a real governor, and is, moreover, merely a negative test. Provided the King be not a Catholic, he can believe what he will. In society, the majority, at least, of the upper classes are either openly non-Christian, or their Christianity is but a vague sentiment, not faith in a definite body of revealed dogmas. Except in England, Protestantism is practically extinct among the educated classes. In its stead we find, at best, a vague Unitarianism covered with a thin veneer of Christian language and sentiment. In very many of the Catholic countries there is a more or less open war between the

Church and the government, while there also the majority of the educated classes are Catholic, if Catholic at all, in name alone. Instead of a Christian civilization, and a political and social fabric essentially bound up with, and resting upon, Christian belief, we find a civilization as pagan as it was in Rome, and, as was said above, governments and societies at best tolerant of the Church, or indeed of any definite creed. The great deluge of materialism has indeed covered the face of the civilized world. The ark of the Church alone, though battered and buffeted by wind and wave, still floats on the surface of the waters. All false and partial forms of Christianity are sinking fast beneath the flood. Yet we need not despair for the future, nor confine our hopes (as many Catholics do, either explicitly, or implicitly) to the saving of a small remnant, a mere ten thousand in Israel who shall henceforth remain an isolated minority, battling on till the day of doom against an apostate world. On the contrary, I see many signs that the flood is abating, and find good reason to hope that the overthrow of the first empire of the Church may *ultimately* be followed, not indeed by a restoration of what has been swept away, namely, the Church-framed civilization and social order of the past, but by new victories, perhaps even a new empire for Catholicism, though of a type other than the old.

It is indeed true that this triumph will certainly not be won in the immediate future. The flood is as yet only uncovering the mountain tops. The lower hills, and much more the plains, are still sunk deep beneath the waters. The spiritual and intellectual élite are throwing off materialism—but they are the minority ; and the vague spirituality they usually adopt (see below) is not a motive force in the social order. Perhaps there may even be a period of moral, intellectual and social anarchy in the immediate future.

Nevertheless, we have reason to adopt a hopeful outlook. Even if the signs of the times were less favourable than

they are, knowledge of human nature would assure us of the inevitable doom of materialism and secularism.

Since man has a soul as well as a body, since he is created for eternity, not for time, since he is made for God, it is impossible that materialism should finally satisfy his nature. St. Augustine's famous words are true, "Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless until it repose in Thee."[1] Man cannot acquiesce permanently in a philosophy which is godless, and in an outlook confined to this life. However great may be the growth of infidelity, the Catholic can watch it without fear for the future. He knows that human nature itself is on the side of religion, and that therefore the tide must infallibly turn. Only he must be ready to take the turn of the tide. He must be prepared to offer to humanity, when once again the religious need, the hunger for the infinite God, is fully awakened within it, that truth which God has Himself provided, that food which alone can really satisfy this hunger. Signs are not wanting that, as was said above, the tide is already turning, that the need for religion is making itself widely felt, and that therefore a reaction from nineteenth century materialism and unbelief in the direction of a spiritual conception of the universe, and of a religious interpretation of life has already begun, at least among the more educated. Materialism is no longer the creed of most of the leading thinkers. On the contrary, modern thought, though, as yet, averse to belief in a personal God, tends on the whole to regard the supreme reality and cause of the universe as some kind of spiritual being. This is not an age of first-rate men in any department of intellectual life. Rather is it an age rich in second-rate men, like the Roman Empire in the second century. But of these secondary thinkers, the great majority are no longer in favour of a materialistic view of ultimate reality. M. Bergson, for instance, one of the most prominent modern philosophers, is an upholder of a spiritualistic philosophy. Many of the

[1] *Confessions*, I, 1. Trs. Pusey.

Pragmatists also are in favour of a religious belief, though their system cuts away all ground for such. Spiritualism has grown apace of late years. In itself of course this is to be deplored, for spiritualism is full of superstition and moral danger, but nevertheless its growth is a sign of much that is good, is indeed the nemesis of the self-satisfied materialism of the last century. We find such an eminent physical scientist as Sir Oliver Lodge declaring his belief in apparitions of the spirits of the dead. All sorts of new religious systems spring up and flourish. Such are Christian Science, Theosophy, " higher thought " and the like. All of these systems are of course erroneous, many even fantastic, and in many points opposed to Catholic truth. Nevertheless their existence and prosperity witness to the need for religious belief which has produced them. I have already compared our age with the Roman Empire in the second century. As regards the religious situation the likeness is certainly extraordinarily close. The second century of our era was also a century of religious reaction from the materialism and worldliness which dominated the first century. Then also this reaction was fruitful of strange and often fantastic beliefs. Magic and astrology flourished, and oriental worships, especially those of Isis and Mithra, took root in the West and spread rapidly. Indeed, at one time it might even have seemed likely, that one, or both, of these latter would ultimately be the religion of Western Europe. Neither could, however, stand against the sole faith that adequately satisfies the demands of the human heart. Both vanished, leaving not a wrack behind. By ministering to the spiritual life of the individual, they had encouraged and fostered personal religion. In doing this they had unconsciously paved the way for Christianity. Their task accomplished, they perished. Even so do these new-fangled religions witness to a revival of spiritual life, to a longing for religion, once more awaking after the materialism of the last generation. Like the false creeds of the early centuries of our era they

foster, as they to some degree satisfy, this religious need. Like those also, since they cannot satisfy it wholly or permanently, they are doomed to death and cannot possibly prove competitors with our Holy Faith.

Another very hopeful sign is the widespread and growing interest in various products of Catholicism. Dante, the typical Catholic poet, is studied and loved more to-day than probably in any age before. An interest in, and reverence for, St. Francis and the Franciscan ideal, which is nothing short of a cult, has also grown up and spread widely outside the Church. Catholic art and liturgy are studied with keen interest and affection. There is a growing sympathy manifested for the religious life. Best of all signs, the fairest flowers of Catholic devotion, of Catholic spirituality, the mystics, are widely studied to-day by non-Catholics. Neither are the mystics, nor indeed St. Francis or Dante, treated as merely possessing interest for the intellect and imagination, or as great monuments of past thought. On the contrary, the mystics, St. Francis and even Dante, are studied above all as teachers of religion, as guides to the spiritual life. Thousands oppressed with the soul hunger for the Infinite, for God, find spiritual food in the writings of the Church's children. Weary of the restless struggle of modern life after a worldly success, which leaves the true self poor and unsatisfied, these men and women turn eagerly to St. Francis with his sublime detachment from the things of time, and his boundless love for others. They go also to the mystics, those models of self-abnegation, men filled with inexpressible longing after God, the supreme Good, the perfect Reality, in finding Whom they found themselves again in a bliss beyond any conceivable to those who have not themselves experienced it. It signifies little that from ignorance of the Catholic Church these modern students and disciples of her children often misinterpret their teaching, that they find a modernist in St. Francis, or a pantheist in Ruisbroeck. They cannot continue to reverence, to study and to love these Catholics

without coming to understand them better, and to discover that their teaching is in nothing different from the faith of the Church. Thus will they come to learn that in the Catholic faith they will find in its source all that has ministered to their spiritual life, as reflected in these men.

Part wilfully, part blindly, the fathers of modern Europe left the Catholic Church. Their sons, as all these signs abundantly manifest, already feel the want of all she has to give. Scarcely able to understand or express their real need, countless numbers to-day are wandering here and there seeking satisfaction for their souls. The earthly paradise so confidently expected in the first flush of the new civilization, wealth and comfort of the last century, if only the fetters of ancient superstition, the irrational and provoking other-worldliness of religion were once destroyed, has proved an illusion. There is a widespread feeling (I found it the other day strongly expressed in a magazine article by some non-Christian, to take one instance as a straw pointing to the direction of the wind) that the much-abused monks and saints of old possessed a secret which we, for all our worldly wisdom, have lost, had found peace, had attained reality, while we are left unsatisfied with an empty shadow. Have we not cause then to hope that countless numbers of such will hasten to return to the faith through which alone they can find " rest for their souls," if only they can but once see it, as it truly is. This return is already beginning, especially here in England and in America, and the tide of conversions swells daily. We may surely expect a vast influx of converts if the true nature of the Church and of her faith is apprehended by the modern world.

SECTION III.

Pressing Need to Interpret the Catholic Faith to the Modern World.

This condition, however, can only be fulfilled, if Catholic apologists set the Church and her faith before the modern world in terms understood by the modern mind. If, as we have seen, the need of religion is urging the best in modern society towards the Church, our part is surely not so much controversy with error as interpretation of our own beliefs. We have but to present these beliefs to those who are seeking after a more or less unknown God, and surely they will recognize His presence revealed therein. St. Paul on the Areopagus lost no time in an attack on the polytheism of the Greeks; he merely made known to the people the God they ignorantly worshipped, as the almighty and all-bountiful Father who revealed Himself in Jesus and raised Him from the dead. What though the response was for the time small, what though Dionysius the Areopagite, along with a woman named Damaris, and one or two more, were the sole immediate fruit of that discourse? Within a few centuries the whole empire was Christian. What higher precedent than St. Paul's example, what better augury of success, can the apologist require for adopting the method which I am urging? To put my meaning more plainly, I would maintain that the present condition of religious thought calls upon the Catholic apologist to interpret or explain his creed in terms of modern thought and affords him every hope of success if he will but do this.

I mean, of course, as regards those who really are earnest seekers after truth and goodness. All those sunk in modern luxury, or in the pursuit of worldly success are blinded thereby to the things of the spirit. Moreover, a vast number are a generation behind the times, and are at present under the spell of that materialism of the past century which has been discarded long since by the deeper thinkers of our age.

By this interpretation I, of course, do not mean what the liberal Protestant means, when he speaks, as do the authors of *Foundations*, of "A statement of Christian Belief in Terms of Modern Thought," or of re-stating Christian dogmas. This will be abundantly clear, I hope, in the course of my essay, but to avoid all occasion of misunderstanding I will shortly indicate the difference.

By interpretation, as primarily advocated in this essay, I do not mean any modification in the statement of the dogma itself, but a relation of the dogma to the speculations of modern thought—an explanation of its bearing on modern problems, ideas, philosophies and scientific hypotheses—its use as the standard or rule by which the results of modern thought are to be judged, and the true elements in modern speculation distinguished from the false.

There is indeed another sort of interpretation which consists in removing from the revealed and *de fide* dogma the setting or incrustation with which the philosophic thought of a particular epoch had surrounded it, and in the substitution, if necessary, of a philosophic setting adapted to the more advanced secular knowledge of another age. Thus, e.g., Catholic theologians now reject the materialistic notions of physical heredity with which St. Augustine had surrounded the doctrine of original sin. This second and more radical interpretation is, of course, the work proper to trained theologians alone, and can only safely be done under the particular supervision of ecclesiastical authority. Without the observance of these safeguards the revealed dogma itself might be confounded with the external

setting, and be discarded as such. This danger would be especially present in the case of such dogmas as that of Transubstantiation, where the terminology of a particular philosophy has been officially adopted by the Church, as being for all time the best possible expression in human language of a mystery of faith.

The re-statement of liberalism is not the interpretation of dogma, but its radical transformation. It is the attempt to separate, not merely human explanations from divinely revealed dogmas, but the dogmas themselves from a spiritual experience supposed to be enshrined therein. It does not seek to show the harmony between dogma and the true elements of modern thought, but, on the contrary, takes the main principles of modern thought as complete and infallible, and cuts down dogma into conformity with these. Interpretation desires at most to clothe the Catholic faith in a new cloak, woven out of all that is true in modern thought; liberal re-statement attempts the impossible task of removing the very skeleton of that faith—the dogmas—and leaving only the flesh and blood, the spiritual experience of Christians. Of course the flesh and blood without the bones is nothing but a shapeless and lifeless mass,—for the experience presupposes and is shaped by the dogmas,—but to this liberalism is blind. I hope I shall not be thought to advocate any such heretical and sacrilegious "hacking of truth's fair form," an attempt to defend Christianity by transforming it into a religion (if so vague a belief merit the name of religion) which is wholly unlike the ancient faith of Christendom.

Indeed, if we wish for an example of the nemesis that overtakes the attempt to separate the spiritual experience from the dogma that expresses and enshrines it, we have but to read the essays on "The Incarnation" and "The Atonement" in *Foundations*. We there find a forcible statement of the spiritual value of these truths combined with a rationalistic explanation which explains away the very experience to which it appeals and which it seeks to explain.

A perfect union of will is a mere caricature of the Incarnation (it is, in fact, the goal of the life of grace for every Christian) as it has been believed and adored by Catholics, and a vicarious penitence which shows sin up is equally a caricature of the Atonement with its infinite and inexhaustible deeps of meaning. If we are to base our belief on experience, at least we should be true to the experience whose validity we confess. The failure to do this is the fundamental error of all such works as *Foundations*, which attempt, doubtless in all good faith, the impossible task of running with the hare of Christian belief and hunting with the hounds of rationalism; of admitting the validity of Christian experience and then denying the dogmas which alone are adequate to express it,—adequate moreover, just because of that very incomprehensibility which is so intolerable to the rationalist. Re-statement of this sort is an interpretation which denies the greater part of that which it professes to interpret, and is therefore no interpretation at all.[1]

Many, perhaps most, of my fellow Catholics will object that this work of interpretation, here proposed as the apologist's chief task, is wholly superfluous. Catholicism, they will say, is not like Brahminism or Taoism, some Eastern religion far removed from our modern world. On the contrary, the Catholic Church is the chief religion of Western Europe. Her churches are to be found in every Western city, her priests walk our streets and roads, her children mingle in every class of society, of which indeed in many countries they compose by far the larger portion.[2] What need then to explain to the modern world a religion so well known, to interpret a creed with which men are already acquainted? This objection, obvious though it be, rests surely on a complete misunderstanding of the

[1] See also Section XXI, at the end of my discussion of the seven main tendencies of modern thought.

[2] In reality, as we saw above, the Catholicism of the majority is merely nominal, or at best extremely lax and superficial.

true state of affairs. It mistakes the outward for the inward. Certainly the externals of our worship, nay more, the letter of our creeds, are known to the representatives of modern secular and unbelieving thought, though I do not think by any means so well known, even in catholic countries, as might at first sight be presumed. But of the inner meaning of that worship, of those creeds, modern thought is, I am convinced, wholly ignorant. It is to them an unreal, if perhaps beautiful, fable; at best magnificent poetry. The rites and ceremonies of our liturgy, the dogmas of our faith have for the modern non-Catholic thinker no application to modern life and thought, no relation whatever to modern problems. Liturgy and creed alike are but survivals, doubtless therefore of great interest, of the life and thought of the Middle Ages, or of still earlier centuries. The vast theological system built up on this creed, together with the philosophical doctrines involved therein, is now but a strange jargon, a wilderness of empty words. I do not say that all non-Catholics, or all unbelieving thinkers are, as yet, so alien as this from Catholicism. Many, however, are thus wholly alienated, and all tend in this direction. The flood of revolution, not alone theological and philosophical, but also political, social and economic, has swept over the face of Western civilization, and, as we have seen, has left it pagan. The result of this cleavage between modern civilization and thought on the one hand, and the Church and her teaching on the other, has of course been that the former have lost knowledge of the terminology of the Church, have ceased to understand her, and therefore look on her as at best a venerable relic of the past.[1]

[1] To pick up a straw to show the direction of the wind, let me instance p. 67 of a little book entitled *Faith and Suggestion*, by Edwin Ash, a writer, moreover, who is to a great extent on the side of a spiritual explanation of reality. He there speaks of "those who find no difficulty in believing in the traditional accompaniments of wings and halos" of angels. It seems, as if the author actually thought that orthodox Christianity believed that angels really pos-

Nor have Catholics, despite the efforts of Newman and a few other great Catholic thinkers, done much to bridge this gulf. Only too often we have not even tried to understand the thought, the feelings and the needs of this new paganized modern world.[1] The terminology of its writings, the aims and teaching of its thinkers and leaders, are for the most part as unknown to us as are those of our teachers and leaders to them. If they read little of Catholic literature, we, for the most part, either do not read at all the books that influence most the modern mind, or read them *only* to pick out and to confute the error that they contain. We do not try to understand their teaching, so as to sympathize with what is good and true in it, while setting aside what is false. Hence, in the two opposed camps of Catholicism and modern infidelity, the members of each know but the exterior of the enemy. Catholics and unbelievers meet in bodily presence; they mix in social life, they may even intermarry; but on the fundamental matters they do not meet. If they ever chance to encounter each other on this forbidden territory, the average unbeliever smiles on the Catholic with good-humoured contempt as on an interesting survival of the past, an intellectual child; while the Catholic in return looks askance at the unbeliever, as at a wicked heretic, who has deliberately rejected the truth. So they pass on, and unhappily (at least among educated men) the greater number go with the unbeliever. Yet, all the while, did but the unbeliever realize aught of the true character of our Faith, of its bearing on modern problems, of the infinite

sessed these corporal appanages, and did not know that Catholicism teaches that angels are pure spirits. Again, Mr. Chatterton Hill in his book *The Philosophy of Nietzsche* (p. 93) gravely informs his readers that it is the teaching of Christianity that the world of nature is the devil's creation! Truly the age of the catacombs and of the asses' head calumny has returned once more!

[1] Of course there are a vast number, especially in Catholic countries, who outwardly belong to the Church, but in mind, in feeling, in life—that is, in reality—are as non-Christian as their professedly free-thinking neighbours.

depth of meaning concealed under those apparently external and even childish doctrines, of its applicability to all the needs of the human soul, as well to the soul of the twentieth century as of the first century man, he must needs reverence and study it, and likely enough would be converted to it. This cannot, however, be, unless the Catholic will also realize that these unbelievers[1] are often very earnest and sincere men, who, without being conscious of it, agree in much with the teaching of the faith, and are ever ready to welcome the truth, if they can but find it. He must explain in terms comprehensible to the average modern man the significance of his dogmas, of his theological terms. He must be able to show what relation his faith bears to modern thought, where it agrees with the results of modern thinkers, and where it corrects them, and in order to do this he must himself possess a sympathetic understanding of those thinkers and of modern thought in general. He must penetrate to the real significance of much that on the surface is simply anti-Christian and immoral. He will then come to see that, in so far as this teaching, whose falsity and evil is to us so obvious, has really been influential, it has owed this influence to the truth and goodness that it contains, and that it is often one-sided and partial, rather than simply false. Any candid man must admit that the writings of unbelievers often possess an earnestness, a depth, a reality which is lacking in very many Catholic writings and sermons. If this were not the case, these infidel writings could not possess the influence that they do, as a matter of fact, possess. It is not only his literary genius that obtains for an Ibsen, for a Maeterlinck, a power over the souls of men denied to the average Catholic writer. It is rather that in virtue of their genius such great unbelievers apprehend the partial truths they do apprehend with an intensity far beyond that with which the average Catholic grasps his entire cycle of truth.

[1] I mean, of course, unbelievers in orthodox Christianity, not necessarily in all religious truth.

A partial truth realized in the depths of a mighty soul comes home to others more forcibly than the whole truth as apprehended by a petty soul, or often, alas! only externally accepted, without any inward realization whatever. If we will study Ibsen, for example, we shall find that his strength lies in his powerful realization and presentation of certain deep spiritual truths. Those truths are apprehended and presented in a one-sided and exaggerated fashion, out of context with the whole truth as to reality given by the Christian revelation. Hence they lead him to very false conclusions and are often strangely perverted. Nevertheless, in his incorrect presentation they possess a living force which they often lack in their correctest presentation by orthodox writers, who are not endowed with his genius or depth of character. Surely then the apologist may well turn to good use these partial and one-sided but powerfully presented truths, by pointing out, that in all their truth they agree with Catholic faith, and thus, so far as they go, bear witness to that faith. The inadequacy and error that accompany them in Ibsen he will correct by setting them in their true context, and he will, moreover, be able to show how that error and inadequacy necessarily arose from their lack of due completion owing to the dramatist's ignorance of other truths. In this way the apologist will at once interpret and defend the faith. He will defend it by showing how the deepest truth attained and preached by non-Catholics is but a small portion of a vast and complete whole. In making clear the partial agreement he will explain to non-Catholics the significance of the truths, that have been so deeply, if so imperfectly, apprehended by their own teachers. Thus will he interpret the faith. Such interpretation is itself the best defence.

In short, the apologist will prove to those who accept the teachings whether of Ibsen or of any other great modern thinker, that all that in such teaching is positive and valuable, is the perception of truths taught by the Catholic faith, and that all that does not agree with that

faith is simply negative, the limitations of ignorance, He will find that when these teachings, on the one hand- and the dogmas of faith, on the other, are thus set side by side in a common terminology, they have far more in common than ever could have seemed possible. How closely non-Catholic writers often approximate to Catholic truth, while the difference of terminology renders them wholly unconscious of the fact, may be illustrated by the following words of Myers (*Human Personality*, Vol. I, p. 218, quoted in Ash, *Faith and Suggestion*, p. 129): "To keep," says Myers, "our chemical energy at work, we live in a warm environment and from time to time take food. By analogy, in order to keep the spiritual energy at work, we should live in a spiritual environment, and possibly from time to time absorb some special influx of spiritual life." This influx he proceeds to term "subliminal" (i.e. sub-conscious), "uprushes . . . from some metetherial" (i.e. supramaterial) "environment." Surely the teaching of this passage approaches quite closely the Catholic doctrine of grace.

The apologist will also find that the teachings of opposed modern thinkers correspond to different aspects and portions of the one Catholic revelation, which comprehends and unites what is true in both. Such interpretation as this I hold to be the most essential and most fruitful apologetic, and most especially, perhaps, at this time.

SECTION IV.

Instances of Interpretation.

BEFORE passing on I will take one or two examples of that interpretation of Catholic teaching in its relation to modern thought which has been indicated above in general outline. The apologist, for instance, will point out how Catholic demonology, so long derided by the scientific world, has been verified by the phenomena of spiritualism, now accredited by such a leading scientist as Sir Oliver Lodge. He will show how the individualism of Ibsen, his assertion of man's right and duty to find and develop his own individual personality, as against the tyranny of stupid convention or unjust social laws, is in its essence accordant with the Christian belief in the paramount importance to every man of his own soul. Where Ibsen is wrong, is in his failure to see that the soul is sometimes found by self-repression and bondage to the will of others, and often by the endurance of great pain.[1] In *Rosmersholm* we have a perverted expression of the doctrine of retributive punishment. It is a sense of the need for such punishment that brings the hero and heroine to their death, whereby they vainly hoped to make satisfaction for guilt. "There is no judge" (they are of course infidels), "so must we judge ourselves."[2] Again, the apologist will

[1] Some of these points will be dealt with more lengthily later in this essay. Here they are simply adduced as instances of the general principle of interpretation.

[2] Bernard Shaw indeed scents this theological conception under-

see in the career and teaching of a Tolstoi an attempt, largely perverted in its execution, but wholly noble in its aim and deserving of our utmost sympathy, to realize the detached and unworldly life led by the Christian saints. Such instances might be multiplied a thousandfold. These, however, must here suffice.

lying the passage, and therefore maintains that it does not represent Ibsen's own opinion; but this assertion is quite arbitrary. *Quintessence of Ibsenism*, pp. 107–8.

SECTION V.

Beneficial Effects of Interpretation on Catholicism and on Catholic Theology.

Nor will such interpretative apologetic benefit only one side in the controversy. By this I do not simply mean that, duly carried out, it may be expected to result in the conversion to Catholicism of many highly gifted, alike morally and intellectually, and so to extend the Kingdom of Christ. I mean that Catholic thought will be itself improved, if brought into such an understanding and sympathetic contact with modern thought. Of course naught can thereby be added to the faith. That were folly and heresy to suppose. But surely the meaning of that faith will be better and more fully realized. If the faith is (as at present) too much severed in the minds of believers from the thought and needs of the age, not only are these believers left without light from their faith to deal with such thought and needs, but on the intellectual side the faith itself tends to become dead to those who so hold it. Dogmas, instead of being used as keys to solve the theoretical and practical difficulties of modern life, individual and social alike, are put carefully away like jewellery and plate stored in a bank. They are indeed kept quite safe by this treatment, safer perhaps than if brought out into the wear and tear of life. Even so are the jewels and plate thus kept most safely. But just as the latter are thereby made useless, so (except of course for the merit of will in holding them) are the former. For good or evil

we are children of our age, and, if we will not apply the truths of faith to our environment, and yet will, and generally must, live in that environment, not only do we fail to convert others, but must inevitably suffer loss ourselves. Nay, if our minds are active and, if we move much in the general world, this procedure is, after all, not so very safe. As time goes on, our faith, still childish in its backward development and understanding, becomes more and more out of harmony with the general progress of our secular experience and knowledge till one day it may perhaps seem to us something in itself unreal and absurd, to be discarded like our nursery belief in Santa Claus and Jack the Giant-killer. These remarks of course apply to all educated Catholics, and not only to the apologist. But they are not alone apologists who formally engage in the work, and who study and write apologetics. Rather must all educated Catholics to-day be in their degree apologists, and this not alone by the example of good and religious lives, but by ability and readiness, when occasion calls, to give an account of the faith that is in them, at least as adequate to their general state of intelligence and learning as would be their treatment of any other matter that concerned or interested them. But we may go still further.[1] Modern thought deals to a very large extent with new questions, covers a vastly greater territory, and is in many respects developed far beyond the thought of the past. If therefore the revealed truth of Catholicism be applied to this thought, it cannot be but that its own significance will be proportionately enriched and its bearings extended. Of course in itself the Catholic faith contains implicitly all that it can signify when its theology is widest extended by its application to human knowledge, but explicitly and *quoad nos* its significance can be deepened,

[1] In the following passage I say something of my hopes as regards the second type of interpretation mentioned above, namely, the modification, not of course of dogma, but of its external setting, by the use of the results of modern speculation. I hope I may not be thought over-presumptuous in this.

and its scope widened indefinitely, by such application. When the meaning of a dogma is increased, either extensively or intensively, by meditation on the dogma in itself or in its relation to other dogmas, we have a development of doctrine in the strict sense of the term. When, as in the case here contemplated, the significance of a dogma is enriched by the application of external knowledge and speculation, we have what may be called a development of theology. No new dogmatic utterances are made, as in the former case, but the dogmas already defined are more fully applied and more completely systematized by their relation to secular truth. When in the thirteenth century the Aristotelian philosophy was taken into the service of theology and applied to the content of revealed dogma, a great development of theology followed. Is it then impossible, nay, is it not rather likely, that a further development of theology will result from an honest, sympathetic and understanding application of the faith to modern speculation and knowledge? Where most of all such development may be expected I shall not here attempt to say, except to hazard the suggestion that (for reasons that will appear hereafter) the doctrine of the resurrection of the body may be appreciated more than hitherto and its significance more fully realized than so far has been the case. Or again, to meet the (often exaggerated) emphasis laid on Divine Immanence by modern thought, the doctrine of the indwelling of Christ in His members and the consequent organic unity of the Church as His body will probably be more emphasized by the modern theologian than it was by his predecessors (see Fr. Joseph Rickaby, *How I made my Retreat*, ch. ix.).

We must not of course forget that whereas thirteenth century thought achieved its triumphs in the field of philosophy, modern thought has been most successful and most fruitful of solid results in the various departments of physical science and of historical criticism. Therefore, though great good is doubtless to be hoped from contact

between the faith and all departments of modern thought, the greatest good will surely be gained, the best results achieved, the significance of faith most enriched, its application most extended and its development most furthered by the employment of the main results of modern scientific and historical research in the service of theology. The accomplishment of this work is of course the task of the theologian. The present writer only wishes to indicate his hope that such work may be done by those qualified to do it, and his conviction of the possibility and value of such an undertaking.

SECTION VI.

The Argument from Analogy.

One of the most important branches of positive explanatory, or interpretative apologetic is, I believe, the argument from analogy. Common sense must surely teach the apologist to follow the example of the scholastics in basing controversy on the highest common factor of truth admitted by both parties.[1] To-day, when the breach between Catholicism and modern thought has grown so wide, the only highest common factor of truth accepted alike by the modern unbelieving thinker, and by Catholics, is secular experience. By this I mean the facts of human consciousness and of human life, together with the external phenomena of nature. On these therefore the Catholic must build up his argument, and one of the best ways of so doing is by the argument from analogy; that is, by showing that the truths of revelation do not contradict the truths of nature, but rather so harmonize with them that the general laws and principles which obtain in the natural order obtain also in that supernatural order opened to us by revelation. This of course argues that both proceed from a common source.

This argument was first brought into prominence by Butler in his famous *Analogy*. It has, however, a special value to-day when thought is so occupied with the natural world, nay, is often (as we shall see) disposed even to deify nature. Moreover, works such as Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World* show clearly that men's minds are interested in the argument from analogy and ready to heed it.

[1] See Reade, *The Moral System of Dante's Inferno*, ch. v, "The Method of St. Thomas."

SECTION VII.

Difficulties of Revelation illustrated by Difficulties arising out of the Natural Order. Further Illustrations from Analogy.

INNUMERABLE are the ways in which this argument can be fruitfully employed. It is, for example, very valuable as a means of meeting difficulties which are urged against the faith. A difficulty of revealed religion can often be paralleled by a difficulty in nature. The existence in nature of the fact about which the difficulty is felt cannot be denied. Why then, we may urge, should the fact of revelation be declared untrue because it raises a difficulty not a whit more insoluble than that attaching to the fact of nature? For example, human and animal suffering cannot to our present knowledge be explained so as to harmonize with a good and loving God. Yet this suffering is an undeniable fact, and very many non-Christian thinkers are convinced that there is a good and loving Power behind the universe despite this insoluble difficulty. Why then should hell be declared incredible, because this also we are unable with our present knowledge to reconcile fully with a God of Love?

Many again find a great difficulty in various actions ordered or sanctioned in the Old Testament; for instance, the massacres attendant on the Jewish conquest of Canaan and the slaughter of the Amalekites and their King Agag. Is it so very difficult to believe that God made use of the savagery of barbarous races in order to effect His Divine purpose, when we see Him in nature effecting His designs

by means of fire and storm, earthquake and eruption, pestilence and famine ? [1]

Yet again the Catholic doctrine that suffering is an indispensable means of spiritual purification and growth is unacceptable to the modern mind. Nevertheless, among the facts of human life is undeniably the improvement of the character, and the achievement of moral good by physical suffering, that appears out of all proportion to any sin committed by the sufferer. Whenever we perceive this moral effect of suffering, we (the spectators) cease to rebel against it, or to find it an intolerable difficulty. This purgatorial suffering, as a law of life, will be found fully recognized by so typical a modern thinker as A. C. Benson in his Life of Ruskin.[2] It is, moreover, found and, I believe rightly, by Bradley in Shakespeare's tragedies, and especially in that most terrible of all, *King Lear*.[3] Those who accept this great fact of purgatorial suffering as a truth of experience ought not to object to Christian belief as making too light of physical pain in comparison to moral good, or find difficulty in the sufferings of the Saints, or in the pains of Purgatory.[4]

[1] The Jews would have been equally barbarous, nay, more so, without this Divine intervention. They could not have been civilized suddenly without a moral miracle unparalleled in the present order of Providence. Therefore God used their barbarism for a good end, just as He uses and overrules the non-moral forces of nature. The same difficulty can be urged in either case and with equal force.

[2] *Ruskin : A Study in Personality*, pp. 88–9, 168, 223–7. [It is interesting to note how the liberal thinker agrees entirely with his brother the Catholic priest on this fundamental problem of suffering, and both seem to place the Christian solution in the forefront of their teaching, in other respects so widely different.]

[3] Bradley, *Shakespearian Tragedy*, pp. 279, 284–5–6–7, also 326–32. This last quotation is almost virtually identical with the teaching of that severest of Catholic ascetics, St. John of the Cross. We should also observe that this is not given merely as Mr. Bradley's private judgment as to human life and pain, but as that of Shakespeare, as read by a careful and impartial interpreter.

[4] Considered in their purgatorial aspect. The satisfactory, or expiatory, character of suffering, and of purgatory, is harder to

Again, is Christianity too other-worldly, too severe on earthly joy, too discouraging of efforts to make this world a happier place? So assert many non-Christians to-day, more perhaps than ever before. Let us then inquire what is the verdict given on human life by thinkers who have proceeded on wholly natural and non-religious grounds. Is it not that earthly happiness is short and even while it lasts insecure and incomplete, that man's hopes are never paid in full, that his loves and friendships have a brief date, being death-sentenced from the first, that his best qualities are marred by weaknesses and vices, and that his noblest efforts achieve at best a success which, compared with the results which might have been expected, is little better than failure? Surely this cannot be denied, and in face of this fact how can Christianity be blamed for proclaiming to her children, from the outset of life, a truth which sooner or later they must learn from bitter experience, and for pointing to the world to come as the home of that perfect and enduring joy for which the human heart craves, and in this world craves in vain?

explain, but is certainly in conformity with a deep-seated religious instinct of humanity—witness countless pagan cults, and the story of Orestes, as told by Aeschylus.

SECTION VIII.

Some Further Analogies.

Moreover, it will, I suppose, scarcely be denied that the ideal form of social and political organization would be a hierarchy in which men were ranked according to merit and ability, and in which the higher orders existed to dispense to the lower all the good which these were capable of receiving. Of course there are some thinkers who would fain have all men on an equal grade. Such, however, hold, explicitly or implicitly, that all have, potentially, at least, equal merit and ability. This, however, we do not find in nature, but on the contrary enormous differences of capacity both moral and intellectual. These differences demand such a hierarchy, as that above mentioned, could the ideal be fulfilled. Some such hierarchy we do find realized in the Church's Divinely ordained organization, and such a hierarchy is revealed to us, as that of heaven. Surely the former natural ideal corresponds to and argues on behalf of the supernatural reality. Indeed, I am convinced, that every fact or law of the natural order will be found to reflect some fact or law of the supernatural order, as revealed in the Catholic faith. All symbolism is founded on an analogy between the spiritual and the material, as also is poetry and all other forms of art. All Christian symbolism, all Christian poetry, all Christian art, rest on the wider and more comprehensive analogy between the natural and the revealed and supernatural.[1] For example, it is

[1] Many truth of revelation are indeed also truths of natural religion. But natural religion unsupported by revelation is attained

surely no mere fancy that finds a parallel between the necessary barrenness of the high mountains and the asceticism which is indispensable for those who would attain the heights of Christian sanctity; between the need of rain from heaven, that the earth may bring forth her fruits, and the need of Divine grace to produce the fruits of Christian virtue; between the beneficent after-effects of storm and winter snow in the world of nature and the blessed working of sorrow and desolation in the spiritual life. These and an infinity of similar parallels,[1] though of very trifling account when taken separately, are, when taken together, a solid argument for the harmony and therefore the common origin of both spheres. The relations between the soul and her God as revealed by the Catholic faith; the close union between the soul and her Maker and Saviour, and the life necessary for such union, often cause difficulty to non-Catholics. If such will but apply to these relations between the Christian and Christ the general types of human relationship, they will find that the latter throw light on the former by the parallels afforded between these human relationships and various aspects of the relation between the Christian and his God and Saviour. Is the absolute obedience required of the Catholic to God's representatives a difficulty? An obedience at least as absolute is required of the private soldiers in an army towards their officers. Christian obedience, self-discipline and the like, as required of us by Christ, the Captain of our salvation, are all illustrated by the parallel of the soldier. Similar aid will be afforded by application of the type of the servant. The farmer and his cultivation of the soil will parallel and explain much of Christian

with difficulty; when attained is not held firmly nor for long, and is seldom pure. Therefore I treat these common truths as belonging to revelation.

[1] Such, for example, as the analogy mentioned above between food and natural life on the one hand, and grace and spiritual life on the other.

asceticism and many rules of Christian life. These parallel types could indeed be extended and applied indefinitely. Moreover the inmost, the most intense, and the most lofty relations in which God of His love permits man to stand towards Himself, and which cause most difficulty perhaps to the natural man, are best explained by applying the analogy of the closest human relationships. Does not, for instance, the relation of father and son throw light on the way in which God guides the lives of His children to ends by them unforeseen, by means often painful and by ways often incomprehensible?

Indeed, all the affections, all the loves of the human soul are in their inmost essence reflected in the relations between man and God. Love of beauty, love of knowledge, love of nature, love of country, love of a noble cause, devotion to a leader, friendship, love of parent and child, love of brother and sister, love of man and wife—all these diverse loves of the human heart are represented in the bond between God and man, are found in the love that may exist between the Christian and his Saviour. They are the manifold "cords of Adam," with which Christ, God Incarnate, draws us to His Sacred Heart.

SECTION IX.

The Argument from Analogy illustrated by the Analogy between Human and Divine Love.

I WILL close this portion of my essay by a more particular discussion of the analogy between the highest of all human loves, namely pure and noble love between man and woman, and the supernatural love between God and man.

Such an analogy must surely exist. It cannot be that the highest of natural relationships, the most perfect thing in the natural order, is alone without its parallel in the supernatural, can alone cast no light on the relation between man and Christ, his God and fellow-Man alike. On the contrary, the relation between lover and beloved, between man and wife is the deepest, the closest, the most far-reaching natural parallel to the love possible between God and man even here on earth, where it has been given to many a chosen soul, and the love to be between God and all His elect hereafter in heaven. The perfection of such human love is of course a union of two human beings, man and woman, a union of twofold nature, of body and soul alike, a union in which the entire inner life of either partner, feelings, thoughts, desires, beliefs and the like, is shared with the other partner. Now it is, we know, common for mystics and other spiritual writers to employ the terminology of marriage, and the human love thereto pertaining, to the love and union between God and the elect soul. For example, Christ is called the Bridegroom of the soul, and the last stage of mystical union is known as

mystical or spiritual marriage.[1] We, however (I do not of course mean the mystics and Saints themselves, but we who know nothing of these heights and depths of the spiritual life), are apt to imagine that this is but a reflected imagery far less real than the objects and facts from which it is taken, as, for instance, when Christ is called the Vine, He is nevertheless not so really a vine as is the actual plant. On the contrary we must realize that although the necessity of expressing Divine and spiritual things by terms taken from natural objects obliges spiritual writers to employ the terminology of human love to describe the union between the chosen soul and Christ, it is the former love and union which is but a reflection of the latter and not the reverse. Not only is the love between the Saints and God such that the love of man and woman is but a faint shadow thereof, but moreover the union of man with God in the mystic life is a union far closer, far more complete and, when perfected, far more indissoluble, than that between husband and wife in the most ideal marriage, so that here also the latter bond is but a shadow or symbol of the former. This supernatural union is, moreover, a union with God of the whole nature of the creature, body and soul with all their powers, for here also is the spiritual in part mediated through the material, namely, through the sacraments, and also in certain mystical phenomena such as stigmatization. Thus the entire self is united to God. Moreover, when fully accomplished, the union of the soul with God is so perfect that it is by participation deified, and though of course never one essence with God, may be truly said to be in-oned with Him.[2] If this stupen-

[1] On Mystical Marriage see Poulain, *Graces of Interior Prayer*, trs. Yorke Smith, chap. xix. Saudreau, *The Degrees of the Spiritual Life*, trs. Dom Bede Camm, vol. II, p. 257. St. John of the Cross, *A Spiritual Canticle of the Soul* (stanzas 20 onwards), and *The Living Flame of Love* (*passim*).

[2] The union of the body, though begun in the Blessed Sacrament as a means to soul union, is fully accomplished last of all as being the union of the inferior element, nor can it be a perfect union like the

dous truth be once grasped we are in a position to understand and to explain by use of the analogy of human love and marriage the phenomena of the mystical life, of the lives of the Saints, else so incomprehensible and even irritating to the non-Catholic. A priest once suggested to the writer that the difficulties caused by the apparently extravagant conduct of the Saints would not be felt if it were remembered that the Saints were men in love with God, and that this love was therefore as naturally displayed in actions opposed to the prosaic commonsense of everyday life, as is the love of the natural lover. This saying has been in my mind ever since, and here is somewhat worked out. Human love is of necessity the richest and most central experience in the life of the natural man, when his life is fullest, and his soul and its powers most actualized, when he is most closely in touch with reality. Now the highest, deepest and fullest human love is that love whose crown is marriage. Moreover, since such love is the summit of the natural order, all those who have set themselves to reflect on nature and on human life, philosophers and poets alike, have of necessity here felt most deeply, and perceived most clearly, the joy and the sorrow, the glory and the littleness, and above all, the mystery of humanity. If then the apologist can show a parallel between all that experience and reflection have proved of human love, and the phenomena of the love and union between God and man as shown in the mystics and Saints, he will surely cast no little light on the difficulties which the outside world finds in this highest Christian life, and will at the same time be making the best use and the most thorough application of the argument from analogy. For the exact parallel between the two loves, the natural and the supernatural will bear witness to the outside world of the reality of the latter. Moreover, when the crown and summit of the natural order is thus shown

soul union. Nevertheless, in so far as a body can be united to God, it is so united at the Resurrection.

to be a reflection and type of the highest and deepest spiritual experience of Catholics, an argument of enormous weight is of course obtained on behalf of the reality of that experience, and consequently of the truth of the creed on which it is based.[1] Therefore I may surely be pardoned if, before leaving the subject, I work out this analogy in greater detail.

That Shakespeare was one of the greatest interpreters of human life will be admitted on all hands. We may therefore safely assume that a description from his pen of certain notes of human love (I mean here love between man and woman) will be true to life. Such a description we find in *As You Like It*, Act v, Scene 2. The marks of love there given are those I now quote,—

> "It is to be all made of sighs and tears,
>
> It is to be all made of faith and service,
>
> It is to be all made of fantasy,
> All made of passion, and all made of wishes;
> All adoration, duty and observance;
> All humbleness, all patience and impatience,
> All purity, all trial, all obeisance."

Now I assert confidently and will here attempt to show that these are the very qualities that characterize the love of the Saints for Christ, though in that love they are supernaturalized and exist in an immeasurably higher mode.

Human love, says the poet, is made of sighs and tears. What tears of earthly love ever had the bitterness of the tears of the Saint who realizes the barrier of sin set up between himself and the object of his or her love, the All Holy God, and the tears shed by such a Saint at the thought of the pain caused to the Sacred Heart by the sins of man-

[1] If similar spiritual experience be found outside the pale of Christianity, it is never so complete and all-satisfying as the experience of the Catholic mystic, but, so far as it agrees with that experience, is surely due to the real but uncovenanted working of the Spirit. ("The wind bloweth where it listeth.") See St. Augustine on Neoplatonism *Conf.*, B.V. 7, 13 and 227, sqq.

kind? Those who laugh not at the sighs and tears of lovers need find no difficulty in the Saints' "gift of tears."

"It is to be all made of faith and service." That the Saints' love is one of absolute faith in Christ, and expresses itself in whole-hearted service of Christ, needs no argument to show.

"It is to be all made of fantasy." Here perhaps we might be inclined to reject the parallel. Certainly supernatural love has naught in it of that fantasy or imagination as regards the perfection of the beloved, so common in earthly love, for the All Perfect cannot be imagined more perfect than He is. But the best human love is not blind, but loves with clearest sight of the truth and despite known defects. Moreover, we can scarcely deny, I think, that, Saints being but mortals, one effect of their intense love of God is sometimes to arouse in them unreal imaginations as regards themselves; for example, the notion that they are the worst sinners on earth, or even, as was the case for many years with St. Francis of Sales, the belief that they are predestined to hell. People scoff at such imaginations in the Saints as the sickly delusions of superstition. Are they not closely parallel to the lover's belief that he of all men is the most unworthy of his bride? Again, we may understand fantasy in the stricter sense, as the power of forming vivid images of absent objects, the power of penetrative imagination, realization or insight, that imagination which has direct intuitions of truth and which is the basis of poetry and the other arts. Such imaginative insight is often the gift of human love, but it abounds in the Saint. What else but this imaginative insight of supernatural truths is exemplified in the extraordinary apprehension and realization,—nay, often visualization,—of Christ's human life and passion so common with the Saints, or again in those visions of the other world which cannot be literally true, but are rather imaginative apperceptions of fundamental religious facts?

We are told that earthly love is "All made of passion

and all made of wishes." Disturbing unregulated passions are of course far from the love of the Saints, but neither is irrational passion an ingredient of the purest human love. Of reason-approved passion, of strong spiritual emotions, whether of love towards Christ or of penitence for sin and the like, which seize upon the whole being, the lives of the Saints are full. What else save a passion of spiritual love was it, to take but one of innumerable instances, that made St. Catherine of Genoa cry out to the friar: "If I thought that your habit could make me love Christ more, I would tear it from your back," or what else but this same holy passion made other Saints burst into tears at the sight of a crucifix?

"All made of wishes." The Saints were filled with holy desires for God's glory and the spread of His kingdom. They longed to give Him themselves a thousand times over, to suffer the utmost anguish for His sake; in fervent prayer they uttered their wish that even the inanimate creatures might love and praise their Saviour! They would even be themselves anathema for His dear love. The wishes of earthly love, however ardent, however impossible, are but a faint shadow of these burning desires.

"All adoration, duty and observance." That all these things are prominent characteristics of the Saints goes without saying. "All humbleness, all patience and impatience." That the love of the Saints was accompanied by intensest humility also needs no argument. This humility is a feature much disliked by many unbelievers. Let such note that even earthly love, if true, shows this characteristic.

The same remark applies as well to patience, one of the characteristics that most distinguish the Saint from the ordinary good Christian who is apt to show great impatience for the immediate success of his work for God, and also for an immediate enjoyment of sensible devotion. The Saint in both cases waits God's own time in resignation,

as the truest earthly lover waits patiently for the response of his or her beloved. We may note also that patience in earthly love is mentioned by Shakespeare immediately after humility, as though the two were intimately connected and the latter followed from the former. That this is also the case with the supernatural lover is obvious.

" And impatience," Shakespeare proceeds to say. He here enunciates a paradox which is none the less a truth. Since our human intelligence is unable to comprehend, much less to express, experience as a whole, we are obliged to divide it up into one-sided partial aspects. In the deepest and therefore most comprehensive portions of experience, any one of these one-sided aspects is falsely predicated, if its opposite be wholly denied. If the experience be regarded from different points of view both aspects will be found to be true. Love, deepest of natural experiences, is therefore full of paradoxes such as this. So also is religion and above all its perfection, sanctity. If the human lover is wonderfully patient in his persevering pursuit of the desired union, and in his endurance of apparent repulse, he is also full of a longing for that union, a longing so impatient, that for him time is multiplied and small obstacles are magnified to great barriers. Though the saintly soul is patient under spiritual dryness and trial, she longs with pain unutterable after Christ. To her this life is merely an exile, and she prays " to be dissolved and to be with Christ." " Quis dabit mihi pennas sicut columbæ et volabo et requiescam ? " " Quando veniam et apparebo ante faciem Dei ? " are the heartfelt cries of such a soul. This is the holy impatience of the Saints, the lovers of our Lord.

" All purity, all trial, all obeisance." These three final marks of true earthly love we should find no difficulty in applying to supernatural love. The purity of the Saints, the purity necessary if the soul is to be united to the All Holy, sometimes assumes forms that may seem to us even absurd. Hard they certainly are to understand, but if

we or non-Catholics find a difficulty in them, we shall do well to think of the purity attendant on noble earthly love, of the jealousy of any affection, however harmless, that might perchance lead away from the beloved, and to ask ourselves whether purity immeasurably more complete and more scrupulous is not to be expected in those privileged to be among the lovers of God Incarnate.

" All trial." If the course of true earthly love " never did run smooth," as the same poet tells us elsewhere, far more is this the case with the supernatural love of the Saints. Tribulations without, anguish of soul and spiritual desolation within, have been without exception the lot of those who have loved our Lord best and whom He in return has honoured with His special love. " Multae tribulationes justorum." We are apt to complain at this and expect for God's faithful servants, for those closest united to Him, a happy life. Yes, they have a happiness in their love beyond any known to the world, but suffering is essential to that love, and, therefore, to that happiness. The Saints have loved the cross, have desired suffering, for through suffering their love is perfected and satisfied, and so do they enter into their joy unspeakable. How can we better learn to understand a little how this can be, than by following the hint here given us by Shakespeare and observing how earthly love is also perfected through sorrow, and how the human lover rejoices to bear pain and trouble, if it be for his beloved?

" And obeisance," that is obedience. With this mark Shakespeare ends his description, and here the parallel between the two loves is also obvious. One thing alone calls for remark. The absolute obedience to God's will as manifested through His official representatives which the Saints—for example, St. Theresa[1]—demand and yield is apt to offend most non-Catholics. Again, let such bethink them of the obedience paid by the woman to the man in whom she trusts and whom she loves, and also of the

[1] *Foundations*, Prologue (and *passim*).

eagerness with which the true lover is ready to fulfil the wishes of her whom he loves, and they will find here a faint reflection of that obedience of the Saints. Such obedience in human love is now, I am aware, somewhat out of fashion owing to the growth of false ideas of liberty. Nevertheless, Shakespeare regards obedience as an essential factor of true love, and I believe that he is right.

The parallel here developed between true and noble human love as described by Shakespeare and the love of the Saints for God has shown us, that the character of the highest spiritual life, of supernatural love could be well summarized by the poet's summary of the characters of human love, so close a copy is the latter of the former. Only a cynic finds any difficulty in approving and admiring human love as so manifested. But the cynic is a man blind to all that is noblest, a man therefore of whom it is hopeless to expect any understanding of the true nature of religion. Surely the enormous majority of mankind who are not cynics, and who do admire and appreciate human love and its characteristics, should find no difficulty in admiring also its prototype, supernatural love, which, as we have seen, displays these same characters raised by grace to the supernatural order.[1]

For all this it may perhaps seem to some unnatural for man to love a Being of a different nature from his own in preference to his fellow-men. Here also the natural order supplies a striking analogy of useful application to this difficulty. The domestic animals, and especially the dog, love man far above their fellow-animals. They soon forget their own offspring, but to man they will adhere with an affection that does not forget. By this love of man they are in some degree raised themselves to a higher kind of life than would otherwise have been theirs. No

[1] Perhaps I have drawn out this parallel of the two loves at a disproportionate and even wearisome length. I hope, however, that it may serve as an example of the apologetic from analogy which is thus applied to the topmost summits both of the natural and supernatural orders as we know them.

one finds this a difficulty or dubs it unnatural. Why then should they be reluctant to allow that man is by nature capable of loving God, whom reason apprehends as the summum bonum, and further, if a well-accredited revelation should so teach, that he can be raised to a supernatural order in which he can love God with an ardent personal love, and attain to intimate union with Him, in part here, by sanctifying grace and by its most perfect manifestation the mystic union, and wholly in heaven, by the light of glory.

SECTION X.

Apologetic from the Nature and History of the Church.

ANOTHER form of apologetic that proceeds directly from the highest common factor admitted by both parties, and from a factor which all must admit, is the argument from the existence, the character and the history of the Catholic Church to the Divinity of her Founder. As, however, this argument has been already drawn out, as well as it can be, by Father Vassall Philips in his lately published work *The Mustard Tree*, I need here say no more about it, save only to recommend this book as an excellent example of what a modern work of apologetic should be, a work both learned and accurate, and at the same time simple in expression and therefore popular.

SECTION XI.

Apologetic from Comparative Religion.

I WOULD also say a word as to the apologetic from comparative religion which will, I believe, be found a very important branch of apologetic. It is well that the C.T.S. have issued a series of pamphlets on non-Catholic religions. Modern thought, like that of the early Empire, is very eclectic, and would fain take the good and the true from all religious systems. Catholicism, however, contains all that is good and true in other creeds unmixed with the accompanying evil and error. Therefore true eclecticism should lead men to the Church. It is of special importance, I think, to call attention to the fact that all the beliefs and rites of non-Catholic religions that are not derived from Catholicism are types of Catholic doctrine and worship, types that owe their origin to those religious needs of man that are satisfied by the Christian revelation. The appearances of gods on earth in human shape foreshadow the Incarnation. Even the myths of marriage unions between gods and men are the perverted and corrupted expression of man's longing for closest personal union with the Divine, and of his belief in the possibility of such a union. Transmigration of souls, as Father Vassall Philips has pointed out,[1] is the mistaken apprehension of a spiritual purgation, such as takes place in Purgatory. The attempted self-annihilation of the Buddhist is an exaggeration of Christian self-denial and

[1] *The Mustard Tree*, p. 464, note.

surrender of will to God. The self-torment of Brahmin fakirs is a misdirected aim at the life of the Christian ascetic. The vestal virgins in Rome, and the virgins of the sun in Peru, witnessed to a sense of the sanctity of religious virginity, and were thus the forerunners of Catholic nuns. The various sacrifices of pagan worship are fulfilled in their inmost significance in the sacrifice of the Mass. Mithraic blood baptism pointed forward to the baptism of Christianity. Even the eating of the mystic bull, at once God, victim, and food of the worshipper, in the Dionysiac orgies hints at Holy Communion. The mysteries of Eleusis, and other similar mysteries, whereby man believed himself initiated into special relations with the Divine, were types of the sacraments of the Church. These are but a few examples of this foreshadowing of Catholicism in paganism. Not to Judaism alone are applicable the words of Aquinas' hymn :

> " Et antiquum documentum
> Novo cedat ritui."

All the religious beliefs and practices of mankind are the " documentum," not indeed of God's voice from Sinai, as were the Jewish law and worship, but of the religious consciousness of man, a consciousness given by God in the soul's creation, and, however darkened and corrupted through the effects of the fall, never wholly extinguished nor totally perverted.

SECTION XII.

A Discussion of Difficulties against Christian Theism derived from the Phenomena of Nature and Human History: i.e., Suffering and Evil.

WHILE, as we have seen, the natural order as known through human experience affords many and powerful arguments for the truth of revelation, it cannot, of course, be denied that it also presents grave difficulties. The apparently useless suffering, the waste, especially the waste of human life and human endeavour, the frequent triumph of evil, nay, the existence of evil at all, are all enormous difficulties, which arise directly from the facts of nature and human life. We must, however, distinguish two classes of such difficulties.

A. Difficulties which remain insoluble to our earthly knowledge, even if the Christian revelation be granted true, e.g. the existence of evil.

B. Difficulties which are only difficulties if the truth of Christianity be not granted, e.g. the lives, useless here on earth, of those who die young; the frequent success of the wicked, and the frequent failure of the good.

To urge the latter class of difficulties against Christianity were obviously to argue in a vicious circle. Nor do our opponents so argue explicitly. Some such implicit argument is, however, implied when unbelievers assert that difficulties of this second class are incompatible with the God of love as taught by Christianity. Yes, indeed, if there were no immortality, no life beyond the grave, such difficulties as those mentioned under the second

heading would be inconsistent with a God of love. But then the same revelation which teaches us the love of God, also teaches the immortality of the soul and future reward and punishment. In other words, such difficulties have weight only against deism, or any similar form of theistic natural religion, not against Christianity. On this the apologist will do well to insist, especially when so many reacting from materialism tend to rest contented with this bare theism as easier to believe than the dogmatic creed of revealed religion.

Still, however, the difficulties of the first class remain. How shall the apologist meet these? In the first place, we should remark that the difficulties which have most practical force are rather those of the second than of the first class. The latter difficulties are general and theoretical: difficulties for abstract thought, such as:—Why does evil exist at all in the universe? Why did God begin a creation before non-existent, and why is not this creation necessarily existent? or difficulties that do not directly affect us as, e.g., the difficulty presented by the sufferings of dumb animals.[1] But these are not the difficulties which affect the majority of men, even of educated men, and they are not the practical, the effective difficulties which fight against the acceptance of Christianity. These are rather the difficulties of the second class which, however they may affect the imagination and the emotions, are, as we have seen, no rational argument against Christianity, since they cease to exist once the truth of Christianity is granted. That is to say, the difficulties which in practice do most to keep men from acceptance of Christianity are

[1] It is impossible for us to form any accurate notion of what these sufferings are. While we know that animals do suffer—and ought not to add unnecessarily to their suffering—we have no reason to believe that animal suffering is in any way comparable in intensity even to the bodily suffering of human beings, whose nervous system is so much more complicated and developed. While cruelty to animals is despicable and detestable, the sentimentalism that treats animal pain as an evil as great as, if not worse than, human is irrational, reprehensible, and even ridiculous.

in reality difficulties which, granted the truth of Christianity, are no longer difficulties for the reason, but for the imagination only, while only a very few people, those of a peculiarly speculative cast of mind, are deterred from our faith by those which still have a rational ground, even when the Christian revelation is granted. Jones is troubled by the undeserved suffering of himself or his friend, which Christianity pronounces to be sent by God for the good of his soul or his friend's soul, but cares little for the abstract and general problem of the existence of evil. The apologist ought, I think, to make this clear, and to point out the error involved when, as is all too common, difficulties are alleged against the faith as rational arguments which are in reality but difficulties for the imagination, if not merely emotional. Furthermore, as against the real and abiding difficulties of the first class, such as the existence of evil, the apologist should employ the argument from the necessary limitation of human knowledge. Modern thought, for all its indecision and agnosticism as to fundamental and absolute truth, is in some respects ridiculously over-gnostic and over-confident. Because it cannot completely justify to itself the ways of God,—and this we certainly can never do, even granted the teaching of revelation,—it proceeds to deny the existence of a God such as Christianity teaches. Many modern thinkers will accept nothing as true which they cannot wholly explain. Against this tendency of modern thought the apologist may well urge the argument that if what we do understand of God's action is good and in harmony with Catholic belief as to the Divine Nature, we are not justified in denying the existence of such a God, because we cannot arrive at a similar conclusion in that immense field of reality which lies beyond our comprehension. Let us imagine a fresco painted on the walls of some vast council chamber. This council chamber is very badly lighted. Only through a few chinks does light enter. But a small portion, therefore, of the fresco is ever in clear light. A

larger portion is in a dim half-light, so dim, that the spectator is only able to distinguish certain outlines, and even these in the dimmest portions appear all distorted and uncertain. The greater part of the fresco lies in total darkness. In the small portions which enjoy full light, the design and colouring of a master-hand are plainly visible. No one who sees it can withhold his astonishment and admiration from the work, and the longer the beholder gazes upon it and the more carefully he studies it, so much the more does he recognize the perfection of the art. There are wonderful pieces of colouring and drawing, and delicate and subtle harmonies of tone and colour. Even in the dimmer portions there are suggestions of great beauty, but nothing is distinct. Moreover, the darker and the lighter portions of the picture are so intermingled that nowhere can any completely intelligible scene be made out. Here you see a face, a miracle of beauty, there perhaps an arm, there a flower, a gem of colour and delicate form, there again a piece of architecture. Rarely do we find an entire figure complete, and it is impossible even to guess at the subject or subjects represented. Nevertheless, no man who saw it could dream of denying that the picture did represent a definite subject, that a coherent and ordered scheme ran through the whole composition, or that the work must be a masterpiece of pictorial art. That which was clearly visible, though so small a portion of the total composition, would establish this beyond all doubt, despite the ugly confusion apparent in the dimmer portions of the picture and the utter darkness of the rest. This ill-lighted picture represents the universe as known through our human experience, but unfortunately all those who reflect on this experience will not as readily recognize the beautiful work of a wise and good Creator. They admit, of course, the beauty, and the wonderful design of what is clearly understood ; but since much cannot be understood, because the full significance of what is known depends on what is unknown, and because much but half-understood

cannot be fitted into any coherent scheme, and seems often inconsistent with any rational workmanship, these spectators, these thinkers are willing to declare that the appearance of intelligible design in what is clearly seen is but an illusion, and that we are not warranted in ascribing the universe as a whole to the rational design of a personal Maker. The unreasonableness of such a judgment the apologist will do well to point out.

Suppose, further, that we have a well-attested statement purporting to come from Tintoretto which ascribes the fresco in question to him, and informs us what is the subject of the painting and what is the general design. Those who accept this statement as authentic, and study the picture under its guidance find the lighted portions, so far as they can be made out, in perfect harmony with all therein stated, whereas no other interpretation will so well account for all that is visible. Surely the supporters of the authenticity and truth of the said statement have amply sufficient grounds for their belief, and are fully justified in asserting both that the general design of the picture is what the statement alleges it to be, and also that it is a genuine work of Tintoretto. Even so the Catholic, who relies on the evidence for the Divine origin of the Christian revelation and the harmony with it of the limited knowledge to be gained from secular experience and study, has amply sufficient reason for his belief, that the ultimate reality is what his creed affirms it to be. The fact that we must live here in "umbris et imaginibus," that we see but through a glass darkly, and that, therefore, our limited knowledge cannot from experience fully corroborate the teaching of Catholic faith, has surely no more force to overthrow this belief, than the impossibility of seeing in the dark picture the entire design ascribed to it in the statement has force to destroy the well-grounded confidence of those who receive the said statement. To deny the truth that we can apprehend, because unable here to see the whole truth, is surely a procedure unwarranted by sound reason.

We behold clearly the perfect workmanship of the Creator in the field *fully* open to human knowledge, and can, moreover, see equally clearly its harmony with what revelation tells us of the whole. We surely ought, therefore, to accept that revelation, and to believe that the whole corresponds to the part and is, as the part evidently appears, the master work of a Divine artist.[1]

It may, however, be asked why the Divine Artist has left His picture in such obscurity. In part it is because of the limitation of our nature, in part it is to leave room for faith. Without great and, to our limited knowledge, even insoluble difficulties, we should be obliged to accept the Christian revelation. Faith would thereby be destroyed. This argument is well stated in Latham's *Pastor Pastorum*.[2] Faith is an obvious necessity for the highest spiritual life, for otherwise self-interest would make us do right and charity were lost. Moreover, the analogy of natural love teaches us that confidence in the beloved is essential to love. The old pagan legend of Eros and Psyche is a beautiful expression of this truth. Psyche's sufferings are all the result of an impatient and self-willed desire to know all about her husband. Those who truly love must have such faith in the goodness and in the love of the beloved that they are content to remain in ignorance, if he so will, since they are certain that the action they cannot understand is noble and right. Even such a confidence does our Lord ask of the souls who would love Him. "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." If we have, as we have indeed, all reason to love and to trust

[1] What portions of experience we can comprehend more or less fully, and what only in part, I cannot here work out in detail. To take, however, one instance of what I mean, the destiny of each individual, the meaning of his life history is mostly unknown to us, whereas, on the other hand, the wonder and glory of his nature are patent to all and clearly speak of a personal Creator of at least immeasurably superhuman wisdom and power.

[2] Pp. 61–7, 144. Also cf. St. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Moun Carmel*, Bk. iii, ch. xxx, s. 8.

the Divine Speaker of these words, we ought surely to rest in content with the difficulties appointed in this life to give our faith its trial, its perfection, and its merit.

The line of argument above sketched will, I believe, be found a very valuable one in modern apologetic.

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SECTION XIII.

Seven Leading Tendencies of Modern Thought hostile to Catholicism. Their Treatment by Apologetic.

EARLIER in this essay we spoke of the enormous gulf which yawns between modern thought and Catholicism. I now wish to point out a few leading tendencies of modern thought which are hostile to Catholicism, a few general characteristics of the modern mind which tend to sever it from the faith. I believe that I can trace in modern thought seven general tendencies or characteristics which are hostile to Catholicism as being in contrast with general features of Catholic belief or speculation. These are the following:—

A. Modern thought is dynamic and particular. Catholic thought is static and universal.

B. Modern thought is vague, Catholic teaching and thought exact and definite.

C. Modern thought is relative, Catholicism is absolute. (That is, modern thought tends to regard relative truth as alone attainable by the human intellect, whereas Catholicism claims to teach absolute truth.)

D. Modern thought, for all its fluidity, is dominated by the conception of natural law and necessity. Catholicism is a religion of miracles, and teaches freewill.

E. Modern thought tends to explain experience by one principle, where more than one is required; i.e., it attempts an impossible unification. Catholicism avoids this philosophic fallacy.

F. Modern thought idolizes liberty in every department. Catholicism is authoritative alike in the manner and the matter of her teaching.

G. Modern ethical thought preaches an all-round self-realization, Catholicism is ascetic.

This list makes no claim to be exhaustive, but merely to bring forward seven of the most prominent and most far-reaching differences between modern thought and Catholicism. Again, we must remember that these seven tendencies or principles, dominant in modern thought, are not based nor dependent upon any definite creed or system. They are but the objective expression of certain characteristics of the modern mind, whose causes are to be looked for in past history, for these characteristics are the inevitable result of the forces which have built up the civilization of to-day, not only the results and tendencies of past speculation and scientific discovery, but also the material forces which have moulded the external environment of modern civilization. They are, moreover, like all things positive, not simply false, but rather exaggerated truths. Indeed, they live and work solely by virtue of their truth. The Catholic apologist cannot, therefore, simply attack them, or attempt their eradication. Any such attempt would be foredoomed to failure, since it is impossible to withstand and overthrow by argument tendencies of thought and modes of feeling which are rooted in the mentality and character of those who possess them. The intellectual environment or atmosphere of an age, the moulds of thought which have shaped and are shaping the mentality of that age, cannot be vanquished by argument, or indeed by any means simply destroyed or even directly or immediately changed. They must be taken by the apologist as *de facto* in possession, and used as such. By using them he will be able to correct them and so gradually to modify them.

We have seen that such tendencies or principles of thought live and work by virtue of what is true in them.

The work, therefore, of the apologist must be to accept and to employ this truth while pointing out the element of falsehood, the negation, attached to the truth in the minds of those who are kept by these principles apart from, or hostile to, the faith. This false and negative element is, as was pointed out earlier, the denial of complementary truths and principles.

Moreover, although the Catholic faith in itself is of course whole and complete, it has been apprehended by and developed through modern thought. It was therefore inevitable that the peculiar characteristics or tendencies of thought of particular epochs would appear in the manner in which the faith was apprehended and in its explanation and development. Now mediaeval thought was to a large extent dominated by principles contrary to those above mentioned as distinctive of modern thought. Hence the understanding, the expression and the development of Catholicism must of necessity reflect those opposed principles and tendencies of thought. This one-sidedness of expression and theological development the apologist ought surely to admit. I do not, of course, use the term one-sidedness in any depreciatory sense. God forbid such irreverence. The understanding and the development of Christian doctrine and theology cannot proceed along all lines at the same time. This would obviously be an impossibility. First, that doctrine and theology must develop along certain lines, then along other and complementary lines; first under the influence of certain principles, then under that of principles complementary of the former. This fact confirms the necessity, insisted upon at the outset, of bringing Catholic thought into relation with modern thought. From such a process a twofold benefit is to be extracted. On the one hand the exaggerations and distortions of the tendencies and principles of modern thought will be removed by Catholicism. On the other hand the effect of these tendencies and principles upon Catholic speculation will be its verification, its enrichment and its completion.

SECTION XIV.

These Tendencies are Mutually Inconsistent: being often Contradictory Exaggerations.

We should remember that the seven tendencies above mentioned are by no means wholly consistent one with another. For instance, the modern dislike of general principles harmonizes but ill with the modern assertion of the absolute validity of natural law and the necessity of all our acts and choices as against miracles and free will, and in general with the over-hasty and one-sided unification, which is another aspect of modern thought. Here, as elsewhere, the nemesis of one exaggeration is an exaggeration in the opposite direction. Whenever this is the case the apologist would surely do well to point this out clearly and to ask whether the simultaneous assertion of two contradictory extremes does not prove that the truth lies in the mean between them. Indeed, it seems to me evident that truth does always consist in a *via media*, not of course in a *via media* between any two points arbitrarily chosen, for that were no criterion at all, but in a *via media* between the two extreme positions possible in regard to any question. Such a *via media* Catholicism can be shown to maintain on all subjects which concern her teaching.

The ships of non-Catholic thought are ever veering from one direction to the opposite, and thus make but little headway. Now, for instance, they are engulfed by the quicksands of materialism, now they dash against the

cliffs of idealism, now they lie becalmed in the land-locked bays of individualism, now again they are aground in the shallows of socialism. Meanwhile, the barque of Peter, guided by the pole-star of Divine revelation, steers right on through mid-ocean, unswerving from the true course.

SECTION XV.

A. First Tendency. Modern Thought is Dynamic and Particular. Catholic Thought is Static and Universal.

A. Modern thought is dynamic and particular. Catholic thought, on the other hand, is static and universal. I treat these two pairs of contrasted characteristics together because they are intimately connected. Thought that is predominantly general is predominantly static, thought that is predominantly particular is predominantly dynamic. Hence to treat the two apart would be as difficult, as it would be fruitless.

Modern thought is pre-eminently fluid and changing, both in itself and in its general view of reality; Catholic thought is pre-eminently fixed, both subjectively and objectively. Catholic thought is subjectively fixed as resting on two fixed bases, the immutable truths of revelation and the immutable truths of immediate experience. I do not of course mean that Catholic thought is so fixed as to exclude development; but that it is always essentially the same throughout its development. Modern thought, on the other hand, is ever changing, often from one extreme position to the other. This, of course, is largely the natural effect of the loss of the authoritative guidance of revelation. As such it is simply a weakness and privation. Catholic apologetic can learn little therefore from it save perhaps to refrain from the attempt to fix, as many apologists do, shifting details and interpretations which are no part of the depositum, and which must therefore change with the changes of human thought. To

meet this changefulness of modern thought, he can but insist on the consistency of truth with itself, and therefore on its necessary endurance, once made known, the same for all time to come.

The fluidity of modern thought with which I particularly wish to deal here is its objective fluidity, the fluidity of its conception of reality. This fluidity is shown in its insistence on the dynamic to the neglect of the static, and on the particular indefinable individuals (persons and objects alike) to the neglect of general types. Modern thought realizes the perpetual flux of things more than any speculation since that of Heraclitus and his followers. The delicate, often unapprehensible, shades of difference which mediate between the most distinct and even opposite things; the infinity of minute gradations with which one being or state of being merges into another being or state of being; the alteration and development of life, often so imperceptible that we deem it rest; nay, the unceasing, though slow, change even of lifeless things, the evolution of the solid earth itself, out of gas back to gas again; nay, of the entire solar system, of the stars, of the whole material universe—all these truths have been apprehended by modern knowledge and realized by modern thought as never before. The modern mind regards experience, both internal and external, under the category of evolution. Evolution is traced in all orders of being, in all departments of knowledge. Hence has arisen in the modern mind a deep-seated feeling of distrust and dislike towards all general statements and fixed definitions. Catholic thought, on the other hand, is built up on such.

Catholic theology and its handmaid scholastic philosophy are, as in the extreme systematic, full of definition and classification. Modern philosophy often denies the objective validity of general terms or fixed and unalterable laws, and seeks to base itself on a pure experience anterior to conceptual thought, which is a flux without law or definition. Such is the teaching of Pragmatism and to some

extent of M. Bergson. There is indeed a modern absolutist philosophy (e.g. that of Mr. Bradley) which treats all difference as mere appearance. But such a philosophy also neglects the fixity of different types and differentiating characters. The universal possesses no fixed characteristics. Moreover, this absolutism is tending to regress in its search for the absolute from pure thought to felt experience, i.e., to become empirical instead of conceptual. Bradley, whose Absolute is a pure experience, is already in a fair way to join hands with Bergson and the pragmatists as regards the ultimate reality. This philosophy, however, is by no means dominant or even popular. Hence, it may be added, the attempt made in *Foundations* to interpret theology in its terms is singularly anachronistic. The philosophy of flux and pure experience is the most distinctively modern philosophy.

But indeed no philosophy is a great force in the intellectual life of modern Europe. On the contrary, philosophy is on the whole almost as out of credit as theology. Since of its nature it defines and generalizes, and interprets experience by fixed categories, it is held by most people to be unreal and without any relation to actual life. Modern thought is historical rather than metaphysical. Catholicism, on the other hand, is extremly metaphysical, and such history as essentially belongs to it represents eternal facts, and truths of a significance universe-wide. We may even remark a distinct tendency in Catholic thinkers to neglect history as being concerned with changing and unimportant details. Of the great thinkers who have acknowledged the authority of the Church the majority have been, and are men of metaphysical rather than of historical minds, men who prize the static element of experience more than the dynamic. Moreover, among the ancients [1] and in the Middle Ages history was in a very poor condition, since the historical sense, as we understand it, was simply non-existent. The apologist ought in all honesty to admit this.

[1] With a few exceptions, e.g. Thucydides, Polybius.

An undesirable result of this predominant interest of Catholics in the static has been over-hasty generalization, a tendency to lay down general laws after very insufficient induction, and all too superficial observation. Not that mediaeval thought ever denied the need of observation and experiment. This notion is the unjust censure of those wholly unacquainted with scholasticism. Such should at least bethink them of Dante's words:

> " Esperienza (experiment)
> . . . .
> ch'esser suol fonte ai rivi di vostri arti."
> (*Paradiso*, 2, 93, 94.)

However, it cannot be denied that some Catholic philosophers have very often made classifications too rigid, have generalized too rashly, have pushed deductions too far. Indeed, these were the chief causes of the decline and fall of scholasticism. Catholic apologetics ought therefore to recognize the dynamic element of reality more ungrudgingly and to employ it more freely. This would lead to a greater hesitation in enunciating as certain truths doubtful deductions from truths which are doubted, and in framing or accepting hypotheses and other generalizations without constant appeal to science or history for their verification. The historical sense would be more widely cultivated among Catholic thinkers. As a result of such cultivation, a certain style of Catholic thought, with its quite absurd neglect of history, would disappear. The ascription of the fully developed mediæval system of theology, ecclesiastical government and worship, to the primitive, nay, even the apostolic age of Church history, would be a thing of the past. The presence of Servers and Communion-cloths at an apostolic Mass would be relegated to stained-glass windows. If the historical sense were more generally present in Catholic apologetics, much prejudice against it on the part of modern educated men would be removed. Let us follow the example set by Newman's *Essay on the Development of*

Christian Doctrine, and by Tixeront's admirable *Histoire des Dogmes,* both masterpieces of historical research and synthesis.

If, moreover, we recognized more fully that our apprehension or statement of a revealed truth or fact can never be fully adequate to that truth or fact—we should be more cautious in claiming for human deductions from, or explanations of, revelation the absolute certainty attaching to the truths of revelation themselves. It is true that certain theological deductions or explanations, e.g. the Immaculate Conception, are proposed to us as infallible and absolute truths : but the Divine Faith which we accord to these dogmas is grounded not upon our private conviction of their logical deduction or of their necessary explanation of revealed truth, but upon the infallible magisterium of the Church which has accepted such doctrines as implicitly contained in the revealed depositum. St. Augustine thought that he had deduced from the doctrine of original sin his physical view of its transmission, or, to put it in another way, that this was a true explanation of the dogma. Many theologians for many centuries accepted this view, but the Church never sealed it with her infallible sanction, and now it is widely rejected.[1] The Immaculate Conception, on the other hand, was rejected as a false deduction or explanation by many mediaeval theologians.[2] Nevertheless the Church has officially affirmed the doctrine, and we therefore know it to be a true deduction from, or explanation of, the apostolic tradition of Our Lady's entire sinlessness. Apart from this exercise of the magisterium we should have had no reason to feel greater confidence in this explanation or deduction of the Immaculate Conception, than in St. Augustine's explanation or deduction as to the nature and trans-

[1] See Abbot Vonier, *The Soul.*

[2] By all the greatest doctors, with the exception of Duns Scotus and his successors of the later Franciscan School. (*Vide Pesch. Praelectiones Dogmaticae,* vol. iii. *Tractatus De Deo Creante,* Sec. 4, Art. 4, pp. 178–193.)

mission of original sin. It is indeed obvious that, when all the doctors and fathers of the Church, who have discussed a particular doctrine, agree that the doctrine in question is part of the revealed depositum, or a necessary deduction therefrom, that doctrine is *ipso facto* definable, and is therefore for all intents and purposes *de fide*. Where, however, doctors and fathers disagree, we cannot possess this absolute certainty apart from a formal definition. The result of our modern sense of history will be an added realization of the absolute fixity of revealed truths, as contrasted with the human speculations of individual theologians, or schools of theology.

On the other hand we must insist as against the modern world that the dynamic cannot be the sole element of reality, but implies the static as its natural complement. Evolution implies a fixed and definite subject matter, a fixed law of action and a definite goal. History cannot be the sole aspect under which experience should be studied, but requires philosophy to supplement it. If Catholic thinkers, and even Catholic artists, in their pursuit of the typical have tended at times to slight the individual, on the other hand modern thought and modern art have committed a more fatal mistake in studying the individual to the neglect of the typical. However different each individual be from all others, it is nevertheless true that definite types can be traced among them. Unless the individuals could be grouped under such types, not only would it be impossible to deal with them in masses, they could not even be made the objects of thought at all, since their real significance would be lost. Knowledge is built upon the universal, which is the general. The particular and individual would by themselves give us only an unintelligible chaos of sensations. If mediaeval philosophy has tended unduly to neglect the latter, modern thought far more fatally shows only too often despair of attaining to the former.

This exaggerated emphasis on the particular affects also

the manner under which knowledge is sought and imparted to others. If specialization in the pursuit and teaching of knowledge was too much wanting in mediaeval times, to-day we neglect unification and co-ordination and fail to see the wood for the trees.

In another way we unify too much (as vide infra on *E*), but this is a false unification due to the attempt to apply the principles of one science to the whole of experience without that previous careful co-ordination of all branches of knowledge which alone could determine what principles were of universal application, and how many distinct ultimate principles are required to explain our experience as a whole. Thus in one sense, modern thought does not unify knowledge sufficiently; in another, modern thought unifies unduly. Both extremes co-exist in different aspects of modern thought; the via media alone is neglected.

Again, modern thought tends to dislike fixed ethical principles. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that there are ethical types traceable throughout all the complexity of individual character, and fixed and general rules of conduct, however hard at times to apply; else had there been no ethics in the world, no ethical art, nor even any possibility of ordered social life. On the other hand the Christian prohibition of moral judgment of our neighbours surely does ample justice to our ignorance of the moral state of individuals.

Modern thinkers often complain that Catholic eschatology is unnatural as fixing permanently man's destiny and character, whereas experience proves that his life and character are ever changing.[1] Surely, however, we do look to a fixed character as the final goal. As men grow older their characters become formed for good or evil. The will is definitely set towards goodness or wickedness. Indeed, the real difficulty is rather how a formed character

[1] Cf. J. A. Symonds' *Introduction to the Study of Dante*, chap. iv., s. 10, *ad fin.*

is ever capable of radical alteration. This may indeed happen, and actually does happen, while we yet live. But it should not be hard to believe that beyond the grave this can be so no more.

Again, rest is the end of movement, as satisfaction is of appetition, and in like manner unification and absolute truth are the end of speculation. In proportion as modern thought has tended to despair of both goals, so has it become pessimistic as regards human life and action, and sceptical as regards speculation. In so far as, by penetrating study of the individual, insight is obtained into general laws and types, so do history and science tend to give place to philosophy, art to become typical and symbolic, and drama to be replaced by epic. Indeed, the greatest and most universal dramas are rather epics than drama (vide Bradley on *King Lear*).[1] Rest and change, universal and particular, are correlative, but of these the two former are the more fundamental, for God is eternally Unmoved and the Supreme Fount and Exemplar of all particulars.

Catholic apologetic must surely follow reality in giving due weight to both terms of the double contrast, and thus it will prevail over the one-sidedness of modern thought, as the whole over the half. If our response is, as is all too usual, a one-sidedness in the opposite direction, this is but to set half against half, and so to perpetuate a deplorable breach.

After all the specialized study of modern scientists and other students, we need another world genius, another Dante or St. Thomas to gather together the general results thus obtained in all spheres of knowledge and to build them up into a unified and coherent system of universal knowledge, with the aid of the light afforded by that revealed theology which should complete and crown the whole edifice. Perhaps, however, as specialization has accumulated such enormous masses of data, no one individual could perform such a work, and we must rather look

[1] Bradley, *Shakespearian Tragedy*, pp. 244, 262–3, 270, 273.

to a succession of such world geniuses (a slender hope indeed!) or to a school of living Catholic philosophy for the accomplishment of this stupendous task. After what has been already said, I need scarcely state my conviction that an indispensable part of such a work would be the due estimation and use of those modern modes of thought, principles and ideals that have been hitherto insufficiently recognized by Catholic thinkers.

SECTION XVI.

B. Second Tendency. Modern Thought is Vague: Catholic Thought is Exact and Definite.

B. In closest connection with the anti-Catholic tendency of modern thought just considered is the second tendency to which I would now call attention.

Modern thought is vague, whereas Catholic thought is exact and definite. This vagueness of modern thought is, in part, a licence of intellect which hates the discipline of exact thought and the bondage of clear and defined conceptions. As such it is closely connected with that exaggerated and perverted love of liberty which is so dominant in all departments of modern life and thought, and with which we shall have to deal later. Moreover, logic is often found too dull to be heeded, and is regarded as something pedantic, pettifogging and unreal. We moderns are apt to scoff at the logical subtleties of the schoolmen. The utter mental confusion and intellectual sloppiness which results from this neglect of logic is apparent in the columns of every newspaper. Consider, for example, the pages of illogical declamation that filled the papers on the occasion of the Kikuyu controversy. You will scarcely read a single number of *The Times* or *Morning Post* without finding some article or letter on matters theological which is simply an outrage to the rationality supposed to be the distinctive attribute of the human species. It cannot indeed be too strongly emphasized that one of the greatest difficulties which the apologist has to face is the modern distaste

for accurate and logical thought: the contentment, even of those who are supposed to be educated, with superficial discussion and unsound argument. This is often simply intellectual laziness—a *Denk-ökonomie* in the worst sense —a parallel form of the modern dislike of solid, patient and long-continued labour. In an age of rush, of dissipation and of comfort, hard thinking is as distasteful as plain living. It is so much easier and more pleasant to adopt some well-sounding catchword, or to follow some vague feeling than to think exactly and to express one's thoughts clearly, which must always be difficult and laborious. Moreover, this intellectual vice is obviously the especial vice of the half-educated. Our age, however, with its popular education, its cheap printing and its countless magazines and newspapers, is pre-eminently the epoch of the half-educated. Moreover, the weightiest matters are discussed, through the medium of the newspapers, by a public wholly incompetent to judge of the subject in question. Deep and difficult questions of philosophy and theology take their place beside the giant gooseberry and the sea-serpent as silly season topics in the columns of our press. Popularized science, popularized philosophy, popularized theology flood the book-market and filter down even to railway book-stalls. Men and women who have never had any intellectual training whatever, lay aside for a moment the latest sixpenny novel, to take up an even worse bound and worse printed popular edition of Professor X's book on *The Problem of the Universe, or The Religion of the Modern Thinker.* Carried away by the touching eloquence of the writer, and flattered by his appeals to the enlightened thought of the modern public, such readers set themselves up as theological luminaries, or, it may be, apostles of some brandnew-ism from America or Anglo-India. Needless to say, these people are not lacking in superior pity for those still enslaved to mediæval superstition and outworn dogma. The best remedy for this evil would be to send such folk back to the less-

objectionable of their shoddy novels, and to forbid them to open a theological or philosophical work for the rest of their lives. This, however, is of course impossible. Moreover, those men and women, however incapable in their untrained mental condition of any deep or clear intellectual thought, are often people with a great longing for spiritual truth and in dire need of religious faith. They ought always, of course, to have had the faith given them by the Church, the faith suited for all, whether educated, half-educated, or uneducated. The only way in which Catholic apology can meet the cheap literature of vague but pretentious scepticism or heresy is by the issue of equally cheap works of Catholic apologetics. In these works the flowing eloquence, the stately periods, the touching appeals, the beautiful thoughts, the vague suggestions of the popular writers on the opposite side, would be severely analyzed and logically examined. Then of course their hollowness would be exposed, and their lack of solid foundation would be evident. At root all men of good will are open to honest argument and common sense, and these should be our weapons against specious flattery and second-rate pretentiousness. Above all, humour is an element by no means to be neglected in popular controversy. First and foremost, however, the apologist must insist on clear conceptions clearly expressed. This is the vital matter when we have to deal with the intellectual vagueness of a half-educated public.

We should remember, however, that such works of apologetic can never be as popular as the cheap literature of infidelity which they combat. The statement of truth requires careful qualifications and modifications, which will inevitably make it duller and less picturesque than the statement of a falsehood or half-truth. Truth requires a trained intelligence, as much as beauty requires a trained eye.[1] Our Lord's teaching, often miscalled simple, was addressed to those who had an ear to hear it. Men who

[1] This fact is a strong argument for authority in religion.

are too idle and shallow to think—and who want their intellectual food peptonized—will never receive mental and spiritual nourishment from the bread of Divine Truth.[1] Nevertheless, we can and should make our works of apologetic more popular than the dry and ponderous tomes which filled the bookshelves of our ancestors.

The modern vagueness of thought, however, and tendency to prefer indefinite suggestion to clear conceptions, nay, even to prefer feelings to logical thought, has a higher side and sometimes a nobler origin than intellectual licence, or laziness, or the confusion and superficiality of popular education. It arises among deeper thinkers from a sense of the infinity, of the incomprehensibility and consequently of the indefiniteness of reality, as known through human experience. The dynamic and particular character of modern thought, already discussed, has led to this feeling of indefinability. Reality, it is felt, eludes on all sides the grasp of our knowledge. The eternal flux, the undefinable differences that exist between individuals, the boundless extent of the universe that stretches far beyond our ken, the infinity of microscopic detail that escapes our grasp in the opposite direction, all these have impressed themselves deeply on the modern mind. In face of this infinity and inexhaustible significance of experience, surely all definite statements, all logical formulae stand self-condemned as inadequate and false. Vague suggestions, indescribable feelings are surely the only fitting expression of this boundless and fathomless experience.

This tendency is reflected in modern art. Witness the revolt from Mozart to Strauss, from Raphael to Post-Impressionism, from Racine to M. Marinetti.[2]

Catholic apologetic in face of this tendency may surely

[1] The revelation was of course only partial, and the apprehension therefore also partial, not comprehensive. *Vide Infra.*

[2] Modern painting and poetry tend to be assimilated in these respects as closely as possible to music.

point out that formlessness is, as such, mere negation, and that even a feeling, which cannot be accurately and definitely expressed in any external medium, is itself a definite thing, as all positive reality must be, since *being* as such is true, and, therefore, *in se* definite. Psychological Science, if it could be perfected, would be able to analyze the vaguest feeling—to explain its antecedents and causes, and to state all its concomitant physical phenomena. I have just said, it is true, that in music the feeling expressed is indefinite. There is, however, no contradiction. Feeling is always indefinite relatively to our finite intelligence because we cannot fully express it in terms of intellectual conception. Moreover, though the Infinite must necessarily transcend the limitations of finite thought, and, therefore, be to us indefinable, nevertheless, if, as the Catholic faith teaches, it is, and so must be conceived or felt to be, an actual Being, indeed the only perfect and absolute Being, it cannot be in Itself indefinite or formless, since indefiniteness and formlessness are as such the negation of being.

Again, since thought and its expression in definite terminology are *de facto* portions of human nature, they must have their due place in our apprehension of experience. Reality must indeed exceed on all sides the categories of human thought and, yet more, the definitions of human language; but, unless man's reason and language are to be condemned as useless, need not, and cannot be in contradiction with these. Though they cannot comprehend or express the whole truth, they are true as far as they go. M. Bergson and the philosophers of pure experience deny that intellectual concepts can give us the nature of reality, because they cannot intellectualize all the data of sense experience. Certainly these data are wider than the concepts extracted from them, but without that intellectual abstraction they would be unintelligible. The concept alone enables us to understand anything of the nature or quiddity of what our senses perceive.

The agnostic objects to the Christian revelation that it

attempts to apprehend and to describe the Infinite under finite categories. This is, however, a misapprehension. The essence of Christian revelation is not that the Infinite Being is in Himself apprehensible under finite forms, but that He has partially revealed Himself to man through finite effects and yet further through the finite and created Nature which He has united with Himself. In so far as God has revealed His Divine Nature to man, He has done so through finite forms which are obviously inadequate, and intended but as a shadow and image of the truth, though, of course, true as far as they go. The very fact that the finite is the creation of the Infinite, and the material of the spiritual, makes the latter an image of the former, however imperfect and inadequate an image. Under such images has God in Revelation shadowed forth His Infinite Being. The Christian revelation, therefore, supposes no limitation of the Infinite, nor yet any possibility of comprehending the Infinite through the finite categories of human thought nor of expressing the Infinite through the finite formulae of human terminology. St. Thomas, indeed, teaches that we can only know that God is, not what He is, and that *by comparison* with the Divine Being our finite being is rather not-being than being. This objection of the agnostic is then groundless.[1]

Again the indefinitely numerous gradations of created being are all gradations of form. Each discovery opens to us either new individual beings or new characters of being, and all these are forms definable and describable, though, of course, no definition or description can exhaust or adequately represent their nature. In entire analogy with this are the accurately worded and technically expressed dogmas of faith. Each of these is the expression of a definite reality, or definite aspect of a reality, in the supernatural order, as is each new registered fact or law of

[1] For a clear presentment of that true agnosticism as to the Divine Nature taught by the scholastics, see Sertillanges' *Entre Agnosticisme ou Anthropomorphisme.*

science in the natural order. Nevertheless, the significance of each truth, or aspect of truth of the supernatural order is even more inexhaustible by that expression, true though it be, than are the facts discovered and expressed in natural science. The least dogma of faith opens a vista that stretches into infinity. Moreover, their significance as realized by the believer is as inexpressible as are the suggestions of music to the trained hearer. Indeed, the dogmatic system of the Church may well be compared to an opera or oratorio by some great composer. The written score is an elaborately formal and highly technical composition, which to the ignorant would appear but an aggregation of meaningless signs. When, however, the significance of the written scheme is expressed in the actual performance of the piece, this arrangement of notes is found to represent a world of harmony and sound, which is able to evoke wellnigh an infinity of deepest and most indescribable feelings. These feelings, moreover, vary with each hearer. In like manner the dogmatic system of the Church often appears to the non-Catholic a dreary waste of meaningless symbols, an empty jargon. "These dogmas are but words. They have no meaning, no relation to reality." So runs the hasty and haughty condemnation passed by many a modern thinker upon the Catholic creed. The score of a Wagner opera would appear equally meaningless to a savage, accustomed only to the wild music of his tribe, or even to an ancient Greek with his limited means and scope of musical expression. But let those who thus complain against the trivial and unmeaning technicalities which Catholic theology has presumed to substitute for the infinite variety and inexhaustible depths of the spiritual life but see that theology realized in the religious experience of Catholics, and, especially, in the lives of the Saints who have understood it best. Then they will find that this dogmatic scheme, like the musical score, is transformed into spiritual music, into melodies of entrancing beauty and overpowering attraction. Before

them will unfold a universe of mystic experiences that touch Infinity, and they will receive glimpses of the Divine, such as are indeed beyond all power of thought to understand, or of words to describe. Moreover, just as the significance of beautiful music varies according to the capacity and temperament of the hearer, so also is the significance of the one common faith different in the different individuals who receive it. No one, however, who has any ear for the supernatural music of Divine Truth can fail to experience somewhat of that which I have attempted to indicate, if he will but study Catholic mysticism and sanctity. Deeper apprehensions of the Divine Nature, spiritual perceptions beyond any possible outside Catholicism are those of the Catholic Saints and mystics. This will be evident from any unprejudiced and careful reading of their writings or study of their lives. In the case of individual Catholics, as for example St. Francis, modern thinkers are coming to recognize this. Many to-day feel that the Catholic mystics touch the infinite as never any others. Often, indeed, they attempt to evade the logical consequences of this admission, by declaring that such men were what they were, despite their creed, or, at least, that their creed had naught to do with it. We must, however, insist that these men attained those spiritual heights, because of, and through their creed, and that only so was this possible. The proof is easy. No non-Catholics have attained those summits of the spiritual life, and those who, like Plotinus, have come nearest have done so in virtue of definite beliefs common to them and to Catholics. We must keep before the eyes of the modern world the wonderland of Catholic mysticism, and at the same time make it clear that the Catholic dogmas alone provide the key to that wonderland. So shall we at once offer a full satisfaction to the modern feeling for the infinite, and at the same time make it clear that this satisfaction is alone attainable through the acceptance of a definite creed. We shall thus refute the false tendency to confuse the infinite with the

indefinite, and to seek to attain the former by means of vague feeling, instead of by the true means of clear thought and clearly defined doctrines. The definite, not the indefinite, is the way to the infinite; spiritual experience, though it indeed transcends logical thought, does not contradict it.[1] On the contrary, such thought is always necessary for the due interpretation of spiritual experience, and moreover, as expressed in dogma, is the essential presupposition of its highest forms. These truths we must bring before the modern world, as we best may. Surely there is no better means to effect this end than the study and teaching of Catholic mysticism in its relation to the Catholic creed.[2]

We now come to the third contrast noted above between modern thought and Catholicism.

[1] In the mystic way, it is true, a period of confused and general knowledge succeeds to definite concepts and images; but this is only a stage on the way, and is moreover confined to the mystic's experience of God in prayer, and has nothing to do with his creed about God.

[2] See also my remarks on liberalistic re-statements in Section III. There I pointed out how those very people who would destroy the old dogmas and get behind them to a pure experience, substitute new explanations of their own which differ from the dogmas rejected in their impossible comprehensibility. They are as much dogmas as those rejected, but unlike them are essentially finite in significance, and therefore grotesquely inadequate. Here also we have another instance of the nemesis of extremes.

SECTION XVII.

C. Third Tendency. Modern Thought is Relative and Phenomenal, Catholic Teaching is Absolute and Noumenal.

C. Modern thought is relative and phenomenal, Catholic teaching is absolute and noumenal. In other words, modern thought tends to regard absolute truth as unattainable by our knowledge, which is, on the contrary, confined to the apprehension of relative truth. It also tends to limit knowledge to the realm of phenomena, and to deny the possibility of knowing reality, as it is in itself, the noumena. This third tendency is a result of the two former. Pragmatism and its offshoot Modernism exemplify this scepticism. We find it again in Mr. Balfour's philosophic writings. Even the modern absolutist, e.g. Bradley, Joachim, who does not deny knowledge of *reality*, the thing in itself as opposed to phenomena, denies the possibility of absolute truth because, according to him, no partial knowledge can be absolutely true. Between the one form and the other this scepticism or despair of the attainment of absolute truth, or of knowledge as to reality, as it really is, almost wholly dominates modern philosophical speculation—though of course not without exceptions. It has even affected many who are professed Christians. Indeed, this scepticism as to the possibility of absolute truth will often be found to underlie more superficial objections to Catholic belief. We meet with men (I have one such in my mind as I write these words) who not only accept but devoutly practise the Christian religion. In feeling and in spiritual life they

are so close to the Church that it seems unaccountable that they do not recognize her claims. First they raise one petty objection, and, when that is demolished, they find another. The truth is that they have no faith at all in our sense. They accept Christianity as the most rational assumption, as the best standpoint from which to deal with experience; they think it most probably true. But they are not absolutely certain of its truth. Nay, further, they deny the possibility of any such certainty. Some of these men limit this denial to the truths of faith, others extend it to the possibility of absolute truth of any kind. The apologist when dealing with such should waste no time in vain argument over superficial matters, but should strike straight at this fundamental doubt. There is not a little modern ritualism which is based on this attempt to satisfy Catholic feelings and instincts, while the intellect is still at root agnostic.

This scepticism must be met by pointing out that relative truth essentially involves absolute truth. Granted, for example, that A is B only relatively to something else, nevertheless the truth that A is B relatively to X is itself an absolute truth. Therefore some absolute truth at least, is attainable. Moreover, the statement that absolute truth is unattainable is itself an assertion as to the fundamental nature of reality, both of the knower and of the object known. Therefore it is a claim to at least one absolute truth. Scepticism is always suicidal, and so is the semi-scepticism that denies the possibility of absolute as opposed to relative truth.

But if any absolute truth be attainable by our knowledge, why should not more absolute truth also be attainable? At least the a priori refusal to admit the attainability of absolute truth can exist no longer. The doctrine that we know phenomena only, not noumena, rests on a scepticism as to the nature of knowledge, which in strict logic leads to absolute scepticism. Moreover, if the noumenon or noumena be in any respect like the phenomena in which

they exist, then we have some noumenal knowledge. If, however, we maintain that noumena or noumenon are altogether unlike the phenomena, we deny *ipso facto* the self-evident principle that the cause must in some respect resemble the effect. If a cause A produce an effect B, A must in some way contain within it B, or a B producing potentiality—something in common with B.

To prove in detail the absolute nature of those truths, which are generally accepted as absolute by all untinged with this artificial agnosticism, is the task of the Catholic philosopher. I only wish here to call attention to this basic scepticism and to indicate lines on which it may be met.

Some advocates, however, of this agnosticism maintain that it is not the attainment of truth but the struggle to attain it which is of value. Absolute truth certainly apprehended would, in their opinion, be intellectual death. To this I would reply, that to strive for a goal known from the outset to be unattainable is an impossibility. Those sceptics who nevertheless pursue knowledge really do hope to attain to certain conclusions, either relative truths which are however in reality absolute, or else absolute negative conclusions. Furthermore, the amount of truth attainable, but not yet attained to, must always remain in enormous and indefinite excess of what has been actually attained to by man. A certain failure in mediæval thought to recognize this did tend to intellectual stagnation.

SECTION XVIII.

D. Fourth Tendency. Modern Thought is dominated by the Concept of Necessity. Catholicism teaches Miracles and Free-will.

D. I must now proceed to consider the fourth important contrast between modern and Catholic thought. Modern thought (for all its fluidity) is dominated by the conception of natural law and necessity. Catholicism is a religion of miracles and teaches free-will.

Both miracles and free-will are doctrines very antagonistic to the modern feeling of a natural necessity in all that happens—whether in the outer world or in the inward life of man. This tendency originated of course in the growth of physical science. Phenomena which till recently seemed inexplicable and apparently arbitrary have been reduced under general uniformities, of which they are but examples. Hence modern thinkers have come to believe that all phenomena, inward and outward alike, must also be reducible at least *in se*, if not always *quoad nos*, under such uniformities. Natural law is supposed to bear universal sway without any exception. This belief is denied by two Catholic doctrines—(1) miracles, (2) free-will. I will consider the latter first.

Modern philosophy is, I believe, almost universally agreed in rejecting free-will. Bergson indeed claims to be an indeterminist, but for my own part I must confess that, in so far as I understood his writings, he did not seem to me an indeterminist in the sense required by Catholic faith.[1]

[1] At least his explanation is unsatisfactory, though he certainly

Now we must, I think, admit that free-will is both indemonstrable and inexplicable. This admission, however, does not carry with it the consequence supposed by the determinist, namely, that indeterminism is false. Free-will is indemonstrable and inexplicable not because it is false, but because it is one of those first truths which are indemonstrable, because the objects of immediate experience or apprehension (in this case of experience), and inexplicable because they cannot be explained by means of notions simpler than themselves. We should also insist that free-will does not violate causality, for the act of free-will is not uncaused but self-caused. That man is endowed with free-will, means that man is privileged to be the uncaused cause of his own volitions. Causality itself requires the admission of a first cause of the universe. Why then should there not be created beings who are first causes of their own acts of will? We experience ourselves so to be, and to deny the testimony of experience because that experience cannot be demonstrated or explained in terms of other experience is surely quite unwarrantable. On the other hand, it is of course true that we can only exercise our free-will within narrow limits, for we cannot will that which does not appear to us good. What the limits of free-will are, and in what its proper working consists, is clearly explained by Father Rickaby in his book on Free-will.[1] Along the lines there laid down such a defence of indeterminism as will suit the mentality of modern thinkers is surely possible.

A natural consequence of this rejection of free-will is the modern denial of sin, and indeed it is the logical consequence of such rejection. Wicked deeds, evil characters, are considered to be the natural and inevitable results of non-moral causes. This tendency may be met (1) by the argu-

does make free-will *as understood by himself* a pillar of his entire philosophic system. Bergson, *Time and Freewill* (The English translation of *Les Données Immédiates de la Conscience*).

[1] *Freewill and Four English Philosophers*, esp. p. 100 sqq.

ment for free-will: if free-will be true, sin is a reality. (2) By appeal to the inevitable inconsistency of the advocates of this theory of evil. They are the first to apply terms of moral approbation and disapprobation to conduct that pleases or displeases them. Thus their own language bears testimony against them to the consciousness of moral responsibility, and therefore of sin. (3) By appeal to this universal consciousness itself, a consciousness which can never be wholly suppressed.

Modern determinists often bestow on themselves the softer appellation of self-determinists—and maintain that our moral choices are determined, not by external forces, but by our characters; they are truly our own choices, and determined by our own will. This is merely a sophism. Our character is itself the result of three causes (*a*) Heredity, (*b*) Environment, (*c*) Our past choices. Of these factors (*c*) was itself the result of (*a*) and (*b*). But (*a*) and (*b*) are entirely external to our will—as external, as a stone that falls on a man's head and kills him. Therefore ultimately all our choices are inexorably determined by external forces. The self-determinist is but an external determinist in disguise. From this external determinism, so wholly opposed to our experience and to our ethical judgment, there is no escape unless we admit the truth of indeterminism, that our choices are not pre-determined either by our character or by any other cause, save the free act of choice itself.

I now wish to consider miracles—a "scandalum magnum" to the modern mind. First and foremost we must, I believe, insist that miracles do not violate causality. They are no more lawless than the ordinary effects of natural laws. They are rather the supersession of natural causality by a higher supernatural causality. If the natural order be the creation of God and a reflection of the supernatural order, it must of necessity be subservient to that order. When therefore the universal government of both orders by their Creator requires the overruling of the lower natural

causes by a higher spiritual cause, this overruling is surely to be expected, not to be considered a difficulty. Man's spiritual will can alter the workings of physical laws within certain limits; why, then, should we find it hard to believe that God's will can interfere unlimitedly with this working? If this can be, the question whether it has actually been so or no is a matter of history. But at least there can be no *a priori* reason against the acceptance of miracles, if duly accredited by adequate testimony, or against a belief in a creed that requires such acceptance.

In many instances, e.g., physical cures, the material phenomenon may indeed perhaps be the natural effect of a supernatural cause. It may also be that, granted the supernatural influx of power into the spirit, a certain physical effect follows by natural necessity. This is of course only hypothesis. Nevertheless it does seem to me the best explanation of the physical phenomena attendant on mystical experience, and I should be inclined to some such explanation of certain classes of miracle.

Moreover, although miracles cannot be regarded as instances of faith healing, they are connected with faith as an essential pre-condition by our Lord, and are granted to faithful souls alone. For example, when St. Peter's faith failed he began to sink. Our Lord made the casting out of the epilepsy-causing devil dependent on the faith of the suffering lad's father. Here there seems to be a causal relation between faith and miracle, though the nexus between them can only be a moral one. God has, it would seem, so ordered the dispensation of His miraculous working, that it requires the precedent faith of the human agent or human recipient of the miracle. Such faith is essentially the refusal to accept the physical order of the universe as final, the active realization that above and beyond this order is a personal Deity who made it for His good pleasure, and can, if He will, suspend its working. Such real faith is very hard, and a great gift of God. Can we wonder that God often answers it by a

miraculous overruling of His lower laws? There is surely nothing arbitrary in this. Because the lower laws are good, it does not follow that any exception to their working would be bad, provided there be an adequate reason for that exception. Faith would be one such reason. Another reason would be a special interference of God in human history, a peculiar revelation of Himself. This granted, concomitant miracles are only what we should *a priori* expect. But the Incarnation was a special Divine interference of this sort. Therefore we should *a priori* expect miracles to accompany it.

It is true that we can never *prove* that any miracle, in so far as its phenomenal truth is demonstrable,[1] is beyond the capacity of natural forces to produce, because we can never arrive at an exhaustive knowledge of those forces. Otherwise we should have a miracle that would compel assent, and thus destroy faith. The unbeliever is, however, equally unable to point to any force capable of producing the effects in question. On the contrary his explanations and parallels are often arbitrary, far-fetched, and inconclusive. Of course, if on *a priori* grounds miracles be pronounced impossible, then there is nothing for it but the postulation of unknown forces or of unknown potencies possessed by forces already known. If, however, on other grounds, we do believe in a personal God, all-mighty and all-loving, the miraculous explanation is obviously far more probable and more convincing than this arbitrary postulation of unknown powers in nature which have successfully eluded the investigations of natural science.

[1] The unbeliever would of course deny that the resurrection of a dead body to life had ever been thus established as an indubitable fact, though, indeed, I have found some one bold enough to maintain that even a resurrection would be within the capacity of natural causes. But we may, however, note with Dr. Sanday (*Outlines of the Life of Christ*) that the miraculous feeding of the five thousand (a miracle obviously beyond any explanation by faith-healing or suggestion) is as well attested as, if not better than, any of the healing miracles recorded in the Gospel, which it is attempted to explain thus.

Granted the truth of Catholic belief about God and of the relations between the world of matter and spirit, miracles are to be expected and their non-appearance, not their appearance, would be hard to explain.[1] Surely then the apologist's aim in defence of miracles in face of modern prejudice should be to show that from the point of view of *total reality*, supernatural and natural alike, miracles far from being unnatural are, in the usual modern sense of the term, though *not of course in the theological sense*, natural, and their occurrence, given the due spiritual conditions, to be as much expected as is an earthquake, given certain physical conditions.

Thus with regard to miracles, as in other matters, Catholic apologetic will refute modern errors and prejudices by means of the truth underlying them, defending and to some degree even explaining miracles by means of that very concept of universal order, which at first sight seemed so hostile to their admission.

[1] These are the words of a non-Catholic nature mystic : " So full am I always of a sense of the immortality now at this moment round about me, that it would not surprise me in the least if a circumstance outside physical experience occurred. It would seem to me quite natural. I see no reason at all why they (miracles) should not take place every day. I do not even say that there are or ever have been miracles, but I maintain that they would be perfectly natural. The wonder rather is that they do not happen frequently." (Richard Jefferies, *The Story of my Heart*, pp. 47–8.)

SECTION XIX.

E. Fifth Tendency. Modern Thought unifies excessively, Catholicism recognizes, where necessary, a plurality of causes.

E. This dislike of miracles is also in part a symptom of a wider tendency now to be discussed—that, namely, to explain the universe by one principle where more than one is required, i.e., *Modern thought attempts an impossible simplification.* This gives rise to one-sided philosophies which attempt to explain the whole in terms of the part. Thus materialism seeks to explain all by matter: atoms, material forces and the like; Absolutism and Idealism by thought, will, or sensation alone; Monism by a common being that is neither matter nor spirit, but the ground of both—though this common substance is conceived more materially by some, more spiritually by others. As against these one-sided interpretations Catholic apologetic has to show that the universe cannot be explained save by the admission of distinct principles, matter and spirit; and that, although both have a common cause, and it may even be that matter differs from spirit primarily by negation of being, and has thus less of being than spirit; nevertheless the two cannot be confounded without denying our self-evident consciousness of their distinction. Perhaps being, that cannot hold the many in the one by an act of perception or conception, is *de facto* an extended manifold. But even so this does not make extension the same essence as thought.

This over-unification also leads to the denial of any breach in evolution, any introduction of an entirely new kind of being. Matter at a certain stage of evolution gives birth to life of its own inherent nature, then life to sentience and finally sentience to intelligence. Of course the materialist will infer that the higher is therefore proved to be a form of the lower, life, sentience, intelligence functions of matter, while the more spiritually minded will infer that the lower is but an undeveloped potentiality of the higher. But such a continuous evolution cannot be demonstrated, and therefore ought not to be maintained, since it is repugnant to the self-evident essential difference between dead matter and life—between mere sentience and intelligence. The lower by its nature cannot possess and cannot, without contradiction of its essence, be conceived to possess the higher; i.e., there is no principle in matter whence life can be deduced, no principle in mere feeling which can give birth to intelligence.

This same demand for a continuous evolution gives rise to that denial of a supernatural order as distinct from the natural order which is the fundamental error of modernism, and which entitles it to the Papal appellation "synthesis of all heresies." This denial of course strikes at the very root of historic Christianity, for the whole scheme of redemption as understood by Christians from St. Paul downwards rests on the belief in a supernatural order to which mankind is raised (after the first fall) by Christ. As against this error the apologist will appeal to the unanimous teaching of Christendom, and to the spiritual experience of all Christians, which has seemed to them to demand the supernatural explanation. The attempt to distinguish between the experience and its explanation is surely illicit, when those who had the experience [e.g. St. Paul (Romans), St. Augustine (Confessions)] claim *the very essence of their experience* to be their delivery from the bondage of their natural impulses by supernatural grace given through Christ. If we deny their account, we are logically com-

pelled to declare their experience an illusion.[1] On the other hand the apologist will readily grant that the supernatural always presupposes the natural, and that grace accommodates its working to the psychical, and even to the physical peculiarities of the individual. Hence its working cannot be detected by *a posteriori* experiment. Nevertheless, when we consider the marvels of sanctity peculiar to Christianity we are compelled, not indeed by logical necessity, but by what I may term a moral necessity, to see in this sanctity the effect of Divine grace, a work for which

> " natura
> non scalcò ferro mai, nè battè ancude."
> (Dante, *Par.* 24, 102.)

Yet another form of this over-unification is the desire to ascribe to one and the same cause all phenomena which possess a certain element in common and which cannot be *demonstrated* to be inexplicable by that cause, despite the fact that those phenomena differ fundamentally in other respects. For example, the psycho-physical phenomena which accompany mystical experience can be paralleled by the phenomena which often accompany morbid conditions of mind, forms of hypnosis and mania. The modern thinker usually concludes from this that the mystical experience is identical in cause and therefore in nature with these states of mental disease. But as Baron von Hügel points out in his book *The Mystical Element of Religion*, the ethical and spiritual results and content of the experiences of the mystic are wholly absent in the case of the hypnotized and the insane. Therefore the experience itself cannot be classed in the same category or explained by the same cause. I would myself go further than von Hügel, and argue that since the content of the mystical experience is from God, and since the psycho-physical manifestations are in many

[1] This refusal to posit a distinct supernatural order is the chief defect of Baron von Hügel's *The Mystical Element of Religion*, which is in other respects so valuable, so instructive, so illuminating, and so suggestive.

cases essentially bound up with it—so that if their objective validity be denied, the experience itself must be regarded as illusory, therefore in many cases even the external psycho-physical phenomena are caused by Divine working, though that working, like all the workings of grace, adapts itself to the peculiar physical and psychical state of the recipient of the favour. Because physical causes can explain far more than was believed in the Middle Ages (though even then the power of the imagination to give rise to hallucinations was by no means denied) we are not therefore justified in ascribing all the phenomena of the spiritual life to physical causes. In the sphere of causality the apologist has especially to fear and to remember the modern tendency to premature and excessive unification. [1]

[1] On the other hand, modern thinkers are inconsistent enough to lose sight of the real unity of reality when they take such offence at the Catholic belief in the value of vicarious suffering, or mystical substitution, as we find it in the lives of certain victims, such as St. Lidwine and Gemma Galgani, and as it is above all exemplified in its supreme example, the satisfaction of our Lord's death on Calvary. The solidarity of humanity underlies this doctrine, as also that of original sin. We might therefore have expected that the modern thinker, who is so eager to find unity everywhere, would not be so averse to these doctrines as, in fact, he is. But indeed he is influenced in this aversion by the contradictory tendency of modern thought already noticed, i.e., the tendency to excessive insistence on individuality.

SECTION XX.

F. Sixth Tendency. Modern Thought exaggerates Liberty. Catholicism is Authoritarian.

F. Modern thought idealizes liberty in every department, Catholicism is authoritative alike in the manner and in the matter of her teaching. If the men of after ages ask what was the most distinctive feature of our age alike in speculation and in action, they will, I believe, find it to be the demand for unrestrained liberty. In the political sphere this is marked by the universal triumph of democracy. In domestic life we find it in the utter emancipation of women from any kind of obedience or even subordination to their husbands, and in an increased independence of children. In the sphere of religion this desire for liberty is shown by the rejection of all Church authority alike in doctrine and practice. Modern religion is more individual than in any previous age. The mere fact that a dogma is imposed as necessarily binding on our conscience to believe, or a practice enjoined or forbidden under pain of sin by any ecclesiastical authority at once raises revolt against it. Catholic apologetic receives no hearing on its own merits. The writer accepts a body of doctrine on authority, and is not free to believe what he will. Therefore his belief is worthless. Such an objection is the great, and often insuperable barrier in the way of Catholic apologetic. The remarks made by many of those who took part in a scientific discussion with Father Wasmann on the subject of evolution are in themselves sufficient proof of the

power of this prejudice to prevent any fair appreciation of Catholic arguments.[1] The other tendencies above mentioned are indeed co-factors in the production of the modern *a priori* rejection of revealed dogma, but of a surety this demand for liberty of thought is one of the most powerful causes of this unfairness. Though we must repudiate this irrational attitude, we cannot deny its power. One of the best ways of meeting this prejudice would be the compilation of an apologetic dictionary containing a large collection of infidel testimonies to Christian truths and of non-Catholic (infidel or Christian) testimonies to distinctively Catholic truths. The mere publication of such a corpus of testimonies, obviously unbiased by *parti pris*, would be an apologetic of enormous weight and value.

This exaggerated and one-sided libertarianism can only be met by the true doctrine of liberty carefully thought out and clearly propounded. Liberty—and here I have to support me, not Catholics alone, but such a great non-Catholic writer as Ruskin,[2] is not freedom to do what we like, but freedom to do what is right. But what is right is shown by reason. Therefore liberty is freedom to follow reason unhindered by irrational force. But this force may come from within as well as from without. Irrational desire and passion therefore enslave as much as external force. Nay, their enslavement is far greater, for they enslave the real self, whereas external force, unless the soul assent, can but enslave the body. Therefore they alone can be free who have first attained the inward freedom which is the rule of reason over irrational desire. But with

[1] At Berlin, February, 1907. Vide *The Problem of Evolution*. Wasmann. Report of the discussion on his lecture. Esp. speeches of Professor Plate, p. 92 sqq.; of Prof. Von Hansemann, p. 144 sqq.; Count Von Hoensbroech, p. 158; Mr. Itelson, p. 159. See also Dr. Senff's criticism of the discussion, p. 240.

[2] See *Time and Tide*, p. 141; *Munera Pulveris*, p. 103; *The Two Paths*, p. 191; and esp. *The Queen of the Air*, pp. 144–160. This last passage is as cogent, as brilliant, and as scathing an indictment of modern libertarianism as could possibly be written.

the majority of mankind the sole means to attain this mastery over the irrational passions is by the aid of discipline from without. Moreover if, as we saw, true liberty is freedom to follow reason, the greatest liberty must exist when the greatest intelligence is followed. But the intelligence of the wiser man is greater than that of the less wise. Therefore the less wise will be most free when they obey the wiser. This principle condemns the modern individualism which is opposed to all government to which the individual does not himself fully assent. Nevertheless, even the wisest men differ, and self-interest may warp the keenest human intelligence. If, however, God, who is Reason Absolute, and, at the same time, perfect Goodness, should command aught of us, it is obvious that we shall follow reason if we obey His command, and so shall we be free. Therefore, if we find that He has given us a law through His Church, only through obedience to that law shall we be free. Again, since freedom consists in following reason, and it is of the essence of reason to seek and to attain the truth, our freedom in matters of speculation will consist in the attainment of truth unhindered by any irrational force or influence. Catholics believe that God has revealed a body of supernatural truths. Since we believe this, we cannot reject any one of these truths, because in itself it may not convince our intellect. To know that God, Truth Absolute, has revealed a doctrine, is of course to know that it is true, and to reject that truth is irrational. But, as we saw, to act against reason is to be in slavery. Therefore to reject a truth known to be Divinely revealed is bondage, to accept such truth is freedom. "The truth shall make you free."

Surely all this is painfully obvious; in fact, a truism. The modern world, however, is mostly ignorant of this simple truth, or else it would never make that *a priori* rejection of dogmatic authority as such. The Catholic has a right to demand of his opponents, who are so disdainful and indignant at Catholic obedience in matters of faith,

that they should admit the rationality and logic of the Catholic position, granted the fact of revelation as Catholics believe it. The scorn and indignation at least would then infallibly disappear. The Catholic apologist may further with every reason require from the modern non-Catholic a candid and careful examination of the arguments advanced in support of the fact of this revelation. Instead of this, only too often they condemn our creed without examination as self-evidently false and absurd, because it demands the assent of Catholics on pain of sin. If no revelation had been made, then of course such an assent to merely human authority would be an irrational slavery. These modern thinkers start, of course, with the denial of revelation. They then, not of course explicitly, but implicitly, argue thus. Granted the non-existence of a Divine revelation, acceptance of doctrines on authority is absurd. We do not accept any such revelation, therefore such belief on authority is *ipso facto* absurd. Therefore Catholicism is evidently absurd, and we may spare ourselves the trouble of examining its credentials any further. When this argument is explicitly stated, the *petitio principii*, namely, the assumption that there is no Divine revelation, is obvious. But then, of course, it never is explicitly stated. Implicitly it underlies at least half of the modern objections to Catholicism. It is for the Catholic apologist to make explicit this false logic, and to point out the absurdity of arguing against Catholicism from premises which the Catholic does not accept. This, together with a careful exposition of the true nature of freedom, will surely provide an adequate apologetic against the false notions of intellectual liberty which pervade modern thought.

On the other hand we must surely recognize that the day is for ever past when Catholicism can be imposed on a people from above. When education was confined to the few, the mass of men naturally accepted what their teachers and rulers set before them. Hence, when once

the rulers in a state—the wiser men—were converted, the folk followed them in crowds to the font. They did well in this, for reliance on human authority was for such men the best, indeed the only road to personal faith. To-day, however, when every man is educated to some degree and when many varieties of belief are set before him, conversions can only be effected through the intellectual conviction of the individual. This, therefore, not wholesale conversions as of old, must be the goal and hope of our apologetic. Nevertheless these individuals, once converted, are subject to the authority and care of the rulers of the Church. It is both the duty and the prerogative of the shepherds of Christ's flock to guard His sheep from every snare and pitfall. Holy Scripture is full of passages to this effect. The reading of anti-Catholic books by those who have neither the education nor the need so to do is obviously to run headlong into danger. To obviate this danger the Church has instituted the Index. Those who do possess the requisite learning, and have also a reason, other than mere curiosity, can obtain from authority a dispensation to read condemned works. Therefore the non-Catholic need not fear that our apologists have never heard their opponents' case. The apologist is always permitted to read the arguments of those whom it is his duty to combat. While the Church through her Index prevents Catholics from incurring needless danger to their faith, even as a good mother forbids her child to read immoral literature, the apologist has free access to any and every book necessary to his work. Non-Catholics should understand clearly that the apologist knows and appreciates the position and arguments of heretics and of infidels, and is notwithstanding convinced that their teachings are false, and that the Catholic creed is true.

A very common effect of the modern feeling against authority in religion is a tendency to regard the work of Catholic thinkers as unoriginal, and even unreal, a mere repetition of doctrines and ideas externally received, not

the result of personal experience. Certainly the beliefs and principles of Catholicism are necessarily to a large extent beyond the range of experience. Nor can the personal experience of any one individual verify as much of the Catholic "*Weltanschauung*" as is in itself empirically verifiable; nay, more, this individual experience may perhaps be even in *apparent* contradiction to it. Nevertheless, the Catholic who applies his religious dogmas and principles to the interpretation of his experience will find that these apparent contradictions, if such there be, prove in the end but empty appearances, due to a partial view of the experience in question. Moreover, the Catholic who, with the right moral intention, consistently regards his experience in the light of his faith, will also find that that experience, so far as it goes, verifies his faith. (His faith does not of course depend on such *a posteriori* verification.) Such personal verification is surely as real as the falsely interpreted experience of non-Catholics and deserves equal respect from the outside world.

SECTION XXI.

G. Seventh Tendency. Modern Thought is Anti-ascetic: Catholicism Ascetic.

G. We must deal now with the last of the seven tendencies of modern thought hostile to Catholicism. *Modern thought preaches an all-round self-realization, whereas Catholicism is ascetic.*

The dislike of asceticism so prevalent in our time is in great measure due to that one-sided demand for individual liberty with which we have just dealt. Free development of individuality is now the popular cry. Any moral laws which apparently interfere with this development, or which restrict this freedom, are set aside as arbitrary and outworn. One out of innumerable examples which might be given of this tendency may be found in Ibsen's *Doll's House*. There the heroine is justified in her desertion of husband and children on the ground that not otherwise could she develop her own personality. Other causes, however, have contributed to produce this feature of modern thought. The immense enlargement of the sphere of knowledge, the almost incredible power over natural forces acquired by man, have all helped to create this universal demand for realization of the capacities of self as against all ascetic, or even moral laws, other than those requisite for the ensurance of the same right to one's fellow-men. Indeed, both this and the last-mentioned tendency are the oldest of those dominant in the spirit of our age. They can both be traced back to the Renaissance

and to the Reformation. If the desire for false liberty of thought and action is especially connected with the latter movement, the anti-ascetical tendency with which we are now concerned is especially bound up with the former.[1] Pater notes this very clearly in his chapter on Montaigne in *Gaston de Latour*.[2] From the Renaissance onwards the European mind has tended to react against what was considered the false spiritualism of the Church, an undue negation alike of the body and its development, and of the secular activities of human life. This doctrine of all-round self-development or self-realization is also supposed by its adherents to be natural, on the ground that if nature gives capacities, these capacities must be intended for use and development.

According to this school all forms of asceticism and mortification—such, for example, as religious celibacy, fasting, monastic discipline—are irrational restraints on the due development of the individual. In extremer cases the Christian virtues such as humility, patience, protection of the weak, and sympathy with suffering, are also rejected as tending to produce feeble, undeveloped beings in place of the fully developed man with all his capacities brought into action, who is depicted as the ideal man and as the goal of their teaching.[3]

Another characteristic of modern feeling may well be considered a corollary to the anti-ascetic tendency—namely, the modern hostility to suffering.[4] Pain is regarded as a mere evil, and the Catholic doctrine of the moral value of suffering, and of the good achieved by endurance of pain

[1] Although the Reformers rejected on theological grounds the asceticism of Catholics, the Puritans and all the really earnest Protestants taught and practised self-restraint and possessed a rigid moral code. Indeed, Puritanism is one of the pet terms of abuse with our modern pagans.

[2] Vide *Gaston de Latour*, p. 82 sqq.

[3] This is especially the position of Nietzsche and his disciples.

[4] This latter feeling is, however, far removed from Nietzsche, whose perversions and exaggerations in the opposite direction are the nemesis of the false sentimentalism of our age.

with a right intention, is treated as absurd if not immoral; certainly as a great hindrance to human well-being.

Now one of the chief modern objections to Catholic ethics is, as we saw above, that its observance often condemns a man to restrictions which prevent the full development of his personality. This objection, as was also pointed out, springs from the demand for unrestrained freedom. Therefore what was said under the last heading with regard to false liberty and false individualism is applicable here also. In addition we may point out that outward restriction is often the truest means to inward development. To endure patiently conditions and restrictions adverse in themselves to full self-development, and to make the most of them, often brings out the best in a man far more than escape to more congenial circumstances. Nay, further, when a moral law would be broken by such escape, then the higher life can only be found, the best in the self can only be brought out, by such patient endurance. Ibsen's Norah forsakes a guiltless, if foolish, husband, and her duties as a mother to find her true self. The dramatist at least does not show us that she achieves this result. St. Catherine of Genoa, longing for the cloister, is married against her will to a sensual husband who neglects her and is faithless to her. She remains with him until his death, fulfilling her wifely duties. She becomes one of the world's great mystics, a saint on fire with love of God and experiencing the deepest realities of the supernatural order.[1] Has she not realized her highest self, has she not found the deepest reality? Or can we believe that she failed and that Norah will succeed? Nevertheless, there are of course cases when worldly ties must be abandoned for the sake of the higher life. Man's first duty is to save his soul. The modern world exclaims against this as selfish, and is indignant when a man gives up family life for the cloister. Strange is the inconsistency of the unbeliever. When,

[1] Incidentally she reforms her husband, and makes a very good Catholic out of him.

instead of saving the soul or of attaining the higher life of perfection, it is a question of developing the personality, family ties count for little. Norah is applauded, when monks and nuns are condemned. Yet surely those who postpone family ties to a vague desire for self-realization should not reproach the Church for putting the religious life before human love. Those who have nothing but praise for *The Doll's House* should not be scandalized by a Saint Benedict, a St. Bruno, a St. Bernard and their countless followers in the religious life, nor even by a St. Alexius.[1]

Those who are attracted by all-round self-development or self-realization as an ethical ideal would do well to read Dr. Rashdall's treatment of the matter in Vol. II of his *Theory of Good and Evil.*[2] He is no advocate of asceticism, but he clearly points out both the confusion and the fallacy underlying the doctrine of self-realization. As limited beings we cannot develop all our powers—sacrifice is essential. No age has in practice demanded so much sacrifice as our own, since it is pre-eminently the age of specialization. When every department of knowledge and art is specialized, why should any man wonder that the Church has her specialists of the spiritual life? Unless a few pre-eminently gifted for a particular art or branch of science devoted their lives to that art or branch of science to the sacrifice of all else, however attractive, that interfered with their life's work, no progress could have been made in art or science, and the vast majority, able to do a little in such art or science, would suffer for want of expert guidance. We all need religion and the spiritual

[1] This saint on his wedding night left a wife to whom he had been married against his will, and became a pilgrim for the love of God. I am told that this legend is of very doubtful authenticity. Nevertheless, the Church by adopting it into her Liturgy has sealed the conduct ascribed to the saint with her approbation and even her admiration. [That is, of course, granted that his conduct was due to an *extraordinary* vocation.]

[2] Bk. II, ch. iii, § 1, 3, § 488–9.

life. Only the few can give up their lives to these things, but these few are essential if any true spirituality is to sanctify the lives and secular pursuits of the many. Moreover, the consideration of man's nature proves that mortification of the body is essential to the attainment of the higher spiritual life. As has often been pointed out, man is a microcosm that reflects the macrocosm without him. In man are united all grades of created being; in man meet the bodily passions of the beast and the intellect and spiritual love of the angel. But throughout creation the lower is sacrificed to the higher. The higher type of being subsists only by ruthless destruction of the lower. Here also modern thinkers are ready enough to recognize this when they would found upon the fact an argument against a loving Creator, or a denunciation of Christian compassion for weaker beings. Yet they find it hard to admit that in the life of man the lower elements must be sacrificed, if the higher are to be duly developed. Man can enjoy the pleasures of a beast if so he will, or those of an angel if so he will: both in their fulness he cannot have. Most here on earth can have but a little of the latter, and may rightly have a due measure of the former. Those, however, who are called to give themselves wholly to the life of the Spirit (as wholly, that is, as on earth is possible) must correspondingly mortify the pleasures of the body. All, indeed, must practise some mortification of the lower animal life, if they would have as much share of the higher soul life as God wills for all His rational creatures. Long ere Christianity, Plato saw all this clearly and preached the truth, and many other masters of human thought with him. How then shall the modern world think that all this wisdom of the past is wrong, and that man can eat, drink and be merry, and yet live a high spiritual and ideal life? Yet there are many to-day who would fain think that a man may rise from an epicure's feast and enter into mystic prayer. Such will find themselves sadly deceived. Not thus were produced the Saints and mystics of old. On the

contrary, the experience and the authority of these admitted masters of the spiritual life abundantly confirm the necessity of bodily asceticism, nay, even of bodily maceration, in order to attain the highest perfection and complete supremacy of the soul. Even, therefore, if nothing further could be said on this matter, Christian asceticism would be fully justified of her children. More, however, can be said.

Catholicism has never failed to recognize that all the capacities of man ought to be realized. Does not her great exponent Dante explicitly lay down in the *De Monarchia* that the work proper to the human race, taken as a whole, is to keep the entire capacity of the potential intellect constantly actualized; that is, to exercise all the powers of man? Catholic thought, however, has clearly seen, as Dante also points out,[1] that this complete actualization cannot be the work of any one individual, but is that of society, as a whole. In other words, "all-round self-realization" is not the ideal for the individual, but for society. So had Plato and Aristotle taught,[2] and so also do Catholic thinkers teach. The specialization necessary to this social completeness certainly involves a sacrifice of individual capacities. Nevertheless, most men, though they cannot fully develop all their capacities, are enabled to exercise them to some degree and to enter into the fruits which specialists in other departments have contributed to the general store. As we have seen, there must be men almost wholly devoted to one pursuit, and all must sacrifice much. Surely, however, on a little reflection, this must seem so obvious as to amount to a truism. On this only need we insist, that sacrifice, and a discipline of life which involves negation of work in itself good, must be admitted on any theory of the universe, and is unfairly used as a weapon against the Catholic faith. It is indeed true that many spiritual writers and mystics speak as though all men ought to devote themselves wholly to the higher life and

[1] *De Monarchia*, Bk. I, chap. iii.
[2] *Vide* Aristotle, *Politics*, and Plato, *Republic* (*passim*).

occupy themselves with temporal things only in so far as is necessary for bare subsistence. Indeed, this failure to appreciate the proper value and place of secular activities undoubtedly detracts much from the practical value of such works as guides for men and women in the world. The Church, however, cannot fairly be charged with these exaggerations of her children—exaggerations, moreover, often qualified even by those who set them down. Moreover, such an underestimation of pursuits and ways of life other than one's own is by no means confined to experts in the spiritual life. Artists tend to disprize all in life that is not artistic, and to think scorn of the men without an eye for beauty. Men of business, on the other hand, tend to despise poets, artists and thinkers as unpractical and useless dreamers. Neither art, however, nor business is an essential part of life for all men; religion and some degree of spirituality is essential. Therefore of the two, the exaggerations of these secular experts are further from truth than those of the mystics and spiritual writers. If then we are not so foolish as to reproach business, life, or art with these one-sided and extreme views of certain of their followers, let us accord to the Catholic Church at least this same measure of justice and commonsense. Justice and commonsense? Yes, truly here and in all other matters these are the chief requirements of the Catholic apologist from his opponents. Granted but these, he will have little fear of failure. It is, alas! just these that are refused.

Moreover, Catholicism promises that all the possibilities necessarily sacrificed on earth will hereafter be realized, in a different fashion certainly, but in a manner that at once transcends and includes all that was lost in this life. All the good that a man is capable of will be his, if only he save his soul. Whereas all views of reality must recognize the fact of sacrifice, faith alone can promise a future restoration of all loss, a completion of all lack.

A particular form of this attack on the Church's ascetical teaching is that she unduly sacrifices the body, its perfection

and capacities. Whereas the Hellenic world brought to a marvellous perfection both the beauty and the power of the body, Christianity has taught men to prefer ugliness to beauty and sickness to health. We may,—indeed, we must,—admit exaggerations on the part of various spiritual writers. Nevertheless, a reaction against undue culture of the body, even a reaction carried to a degree somewhat extreme, was necessary if the soul was to be assured of its due predominance.

Material beauty is at its height when matter best subserves and expresses spirit. The beauty of the human body is no exception to this rule. The chief beauty of bodily form among the Greeks and in Greek art was due to its perfect expression of intellect. Can we then deny an even greater beauty to a countenance which expresses deep spiritual power and lofty spiritual perfection? Nevertheless, undoubtedly the ascetics have often illtreated and disfigured their bodies, ruined their health and crippled their limbs. This certainly remains true, for all the glow of spiritual glory shining in their faces.

In an earlier portion of this essay I spoke of the illogical procedure of many enemies of our faith in taking one portion of that faith out of the due context supplied by the other doctrines and then attacking it as if it were by itself the whole of Catholicism. Here also is this the case. When our opponents charge Catholicism with undue neglect of the body, they forget or ignore that one of the doctrines of our faith is the resurrection of the body, glorified alike in beauty and in capacity to a degree beyond all present conception. It is not the glorification of the flesh that Catholicism condemns, but what Father Rickaby terms the "premature" glorification of the flesh.[1] We have seen already that Catholicism, in face of the necessary sacrifice of good on earth, promises a full restoration hereafter. So especially it is with regard to the body. Since the flesh of fallen man is disordered and apt to hinder the

[1] *Waters that go Softly*, p. 144.

true life of his soul, that flesh must largely be sacrificed in the soul's interests—most largely in those called to the highest soul life. Hereafter in blessed compensation the glorified soul will be eternally united with a body that will no longer hinder, but will perfectly subserve and express the soul. This body will thereby itself attain a beauty, as far exceeding that of the highest Hellenic ideal of physical beauty, as the glory of a soul in possession of the beatific vision exceeds that of a soul adorned most fully with the purely natural virtues. This future glory of the human body, a glory already consummated in the bodies of our Saviour and His Immaculate Mother, is a doctrine which may be expected to assume greater prominence in Catholic thought hereafter. In the necessary reaction against pagan exaggeration, this aspect of the faith has, I believe, not yet been fully realized and developed. Many spiritual writers speak almost as if the soul alone were immortal. St. Theresa found it necessary to insist on the importance of the contemplation of Christ's glorified Body, as against a false spirituality which would regard only His Divinity.[1] In her devotion to St. Joseph this great mystic was a forerunner of a mighty development to come. May she not also be a forerunner of a development and realization of the dogma of the resurrection of the body? If the modern insistence on the importance of the body is to be met by Catholic thought, the good assimilated and the bad rejected, may we not expect as the result a greater emphasis and a deeper understanding of all implied by this doctrine than has existed hitherto?

One great error of modern thought and feeling that is in close connection with this subject is a tendency to confuse unrestrained physical passion with intensity and perfection of human love. This is only too marked in many modern plays and novels, and is perhaps the unhealthiest tendency of present day literature. Often, indeed, the two are found together; but whenever this is so, the physical

[1] Autobiography, ch. xxii, § 2 sqq. (trs. David Lewis, p. 178 sqq.)

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passion, *in so far as it is lawless and irrational*, deteriorates the spiritual love. In proportion as the physical becomes the dominant element in love, it destroys the unselfishness and the seeking of the loved one's good that are of the essence of love. True love is essentially pure, a love in which the body is subject to the soul. In face of this modern tendency we will surely do well to insist on the fact and importance of this distinction, and on the true relation between body and soul in human love.

Having now dealt with the general anti-ascetic tendency of modern thought, I would add a few words as a corollary. The modern hatred of suffering as being *per se* evil makes it very hostile to the Catholic glorification of pain as an essential means to spiritual perfection. The Church indeed goes even further, and teaches that in some way suffering has of itself a mysterious potency of good; it can expiate sin and give God glory. We have already seen how past history and present experience unite to teach on all hands this same lesson of the moral value of pain, and that it therefore is no peculiar characteristic of Catholicism. Here also Catholicism is able to regard suffering not as permanent, but as transitory, and to be replaced by an eternity of happiness. Moreover, our ever-increasing sense of the solidarity of humanity ought surely to make it easier to understand vicarious or expiatory suffering. (See above, Section XVIII, *ad fin.*)

Again, the lives of the Saints and mystics witness, as an undeniable fact of experience, to a necessary connection between suffering patiently accepted or voluntarily inflicted on the one hand, and deepest spiritual insight, yes, and even joy unspeakable on the other.

Such facts of mystical experience, together with the innumerable admissions by secular and non-Christian thinkers of the spiritual value of suffering, are surely our best answer to those who charge our faith with glorifying, and thereby increasing the pain of humanity. (See also above, Section VII, p. 25.)

SECTION XXII.

Catholic Dogma prevents the Narrowing of Truth to Partial Aspects.

The discussion of these seven tendencies and their treatment by the Catholic apologist leads to a conception of Catholic dogma which will at first sight seem a strange paradox; namely, that one great function of Catholic dogma is to prevent the one-sided narrowing of truth—to keep all the windows open through which the thought of man looks upon reality. Every age has its particular tendencies of thought, just as every individual has his particular prejudices, his particular stock of ideas. These tendencies which compose the Zeitgeist, like these individual modes of thought, are based on truth and represent an aspect of the truth; but because our age is no more the whole of human history than the knowledge of the individual mind is the sum total of human knowledge, therefore no one age can perceive all the aspects of truth apprehensible by man. It must of necessity have an unbalanced, a one-sided view. The dogmatic system of the Church completes this one-sidedness by insisting on those aspects of truth which each individual age is apt to overlook, if left to itself. All through her history the Church as the guardian of the entire revelation has acted thus toward the various schools of thought that have sprung up in her midst. The Pelagians make free-will everything, and deny or unduly minimize grace—the Church condemns them; the Jansenists make grace everything, and deny or unduly minimize man's

free-will—the Church condemns them also. Here, to take one instance out of very many, the dogma imposed by the Church, far from narrowing the truth (as is so commonly supposed), intervenes to prevent such narrowing. Often and often again the purport of definition is to prevent the assertion of one aspect of truth to the denial of its complementary aspect. Nestorius teaches that Christ is but a divinized man—the Monophysite, horrified at this heresy, flies to the opposite extreme, and denies Him a human soul distinct from the Divinity. Both wish to assert one aspect of truth to the exclusion of the other—the Church rejects the negations of both.

When the finite human intellect receives a revelation of Divine Truth, from its very finitude it cannot comprehend fully that revelation, and therefore cannot harmonize all its parts, cannot form all its data into a logically consistent whole. In other words, it necessarily results from the essential limitation inherent in human thought and language, that when the ultimate Reality, Who is the Fulness, the Perfection, and Infinity of Being, and His works are revealed through these, the statement will often assume the form of a series of complementary propositions whose harmony is beyond our comprehension. God is Unity, absolute Unity, but He is three also. He is perfect Love, but also perfect Justice. Grace is the source of every act that merits salvation, but every such act proceeds from free-will. Jesus is perfect God, but perfect Man also. The Bible is inspired in all its parts, but also in all its parts the work of a created intelligence. This is not to say that contradictions are reconciled in the Absolute, which is a denial of the laws of thought, but to say that the truth as to Absolute Reality when expressed in our finite categories will take the form of propositions which, though not contradictory, are beyond reconciliation by our understanding. Thus the dogmas of faith are often paradoxes to our thought. In this life, as St. Paul has told us, we see "*in ænigmate.*" These paradoxes are sometimes wrongly

taken as contradictions, and one of them is rejected. A false harmony is sought by the denial of one member of the apparent paradox, i.e. by the sacrifice of an essential portion of revelation. But a theological system so obtained, though superficially perhaps more logical, is, by its very negations, unable to cover the entire content of that revealed truth which alone can satisfy all the needs of the human soul to which the revelation has been given. Hence heresy is succeeded by heresy, each contradicting the fundamental principle of the other and basing itself on the opposite aspect of revealed truth. But the Church rejects such incomplete harmonies, and maintains the depositum in its fulness, knowing that, if it could be perfectly harmonized, that very harmony would prove it an inadequate and man-made statement of the truth of the Incomprehensible God.

The same is true of philosophic systems, but of this I spoke above in the section dealing with the undue unification attempted by modern thought. Thus it is heresy that is narrow-minded, not orthodoxy; heresy that denies, orthodoxy that affirms; heresy that starves the religious needs of man, orthodoxy that has meat to satisfy every craving of the human soul.[1]

[1] See also my remarks on liberal re-statement in Section III, and my remarks on the same subject at the end of my discussion of *E* (above).

SECTION XXIII.

Pantheism or Spiritualistic Monism the Rival and Direct Enemy of Catholicism.

We saw at the outset that there is a growing desire for religion among the more thoughtful at the present day, a reaction from the materialistic atheism and agnosticism so dominant in the last century. We have now also seen that modern thought is under the influence of powerful tendencies which act against the understanding and reception of Catholicism. Nevertheless, this need for religion, since it can alone be satisfied by the Catholic faith, will tend of itself to turn men's minds towards that faith, unless some other form of belief should present itself that promises satisfaction to these reviving religious needs, and is more in harmony with modern thought, as it actually is, with its error, as well as with its truth. Is there any such religious belief in existence which is in this way likely to prove a dangerous competitor with Catholicism for the assent of the modern world? Certainly no such competitor is to be feared in any of the petty mushroom sects which have sprung up of late years—sects such as Christian Science, Theosophy and neo-Buddhism, Spiritualism, or "higher thought." These sects are too partial in their appeal, are obviously one-sided and fantastic, and in many cases even contain an element of charlatanry. Moreover, some of these demand the acceptance of dogmas as definite as those of the Church without any scrap of evidence in their favour. Such, therefore, have no hope of permanent success, nor indeed

can they even now boast of many adherents among the most highly gifted, intellectually or spiritually.[1]

No master mind has given his adhesion to any of these religious systems. Catholicism has surely little more to fear from this quarter than from dying Protestantism. Nevertheless there is a dangerous rival in the field, a religion which bids fair to obtain the allegiance of a large portion of civilized mankind, a religion which will prove, in my opinion, the chief foe of Catholicism in the coming century. This is the belief which, considered on its philosophical side, may be termed Spiritualistic Monism,[2] and on its theological side Pantheism. The fundamental principle of this belief is that all reality is one spiritual being, or rather a being that is neither spirit nor matter, but such that matter and spirit are alike but aspects of him or it. All that appears is but a passing aspect of this being—a form under which this being realizes himself or itself. Such a belief is philosophically Monism, in so far as it asserts the essential identity of matter and spirit; it is Pantheism in so far as it regards all being, material and spiritual, as aspects of one absolute being or God.

Of course such a belief appears in slightly varying forms in its different adherents, for it is undogmatic, a religion of private judgment. I think, however, that its fundamental character, its essential nature has been truly described above. Moreover, this belief requires no special organization or worship, but is compatible with membership in any non-exclusive religious body, and, while admitting the use of

[1] Neo-Buddhism in its various forms does seem to have laid hold of many even of the educated; but I suspect it is a religion which lays more stress on the former part of the compound, and is simply a vague mysticism which adopts an Eastern colouring in order to mark itself off more distinctly from Christianity of any sort. It would thus tend ultimately to become a species of the spiritualistic Monism, with which I am going to deal.

[2] There is a materialistic Monism which treats spirit as a form of matter, and which is simply the old materialism under a new name. As we shall see, this accompanies the higher Monism, as its lower form and its presence is no slight argument against the former.

any sort of ritual, can also dispense altogether with ritual and external worship. It is thus adapted to all circumstances and to all people. No man by its profession need abandon the worship or religious body of his forefathers, unless, like the Catholic Church, that body should refuse to keep him within her fold. This Pantheism is the logical outcome of Modernism in all its forms. The New Theology is openly pantheistic. If a distinct supernatural order be rejected, and religion be regarded as simply a natural experience of humanity, it is but a short step to the deification of man, and Pantheism is at the door.

Monism, rightly understood, would serve equally well as the title of this belief. As, however, I wish to emphasize the religious aspect, I prefer the term Pantheism. This is no new-fangled doctrine of yesterday, no American importation with Mrs. Eddy for its prophet, no minglemangle of Eastern superstitions apostolized by an Annie Besant or a Madame Blavatsky.[1] On the contrary, it has a long history and has been the belief of many amongst the greatest human intellects. Pantheism in its various forms counts among its adherents all, or almost all, the religious philosophies of the Far East, the entire Eclectic and Stoic schools of Greek Philosophy, Giordano Bruno, Spinoza, Shelley, Goethe, Schiller, Swinburne, Walt Whitman, Maeterlinck, Caird, Bradley, McTaggart, Eucken, and Benedetto Croce.

It especially appeals to poets and to mystics; that is, to types of mankind particularly idealistic and disposed to religion. Even so distinctly Christian a poet as Wordsworth betrays leanings to Pantheism, as also do certain mediæval mystics, in intention orthodox, such as Eckhardt. Pantheism is certainly not yet very widely extended, nor a very strong power. It is rather in the future that it is to be feared. When the turn of the tide towards religion

[1] Yet Theosophy shorn of its more fantastic features is a form of Pantheism.

sets in fuller, and the modern world feels more universally the need of spiritual satisfaction, then will come the hour of this Pantheism or Spiritualistic Monism. It will be able to offer a specious pretence of satisfaction for all the needs of the human soul, and, indeed, being without outward observances or historical dogmas, it will seem to many far more spiritual than Catholicism. Moreover, it gratifies all those tendencies of the modern mind noted above as hostile to our faith.

SECTION XXIV.

Pantheism or Monism appeals to the Seven Tendencies of Modern Thought discussed Above.

I WILL now take in order these seven tendencies, and show how this Pantheism or Monism has a peculiar appeal to them all.

A. Modern thought is dynamic and particular. This Pantheism is based on an exceedingly dynamic view of reality. The universe is the necessary self-manifestation of God, or of the One Spirit. This self-manifestation is often conceived as a struggle towards perfection. It is obvious that such a concept exactly suits the modern dynamism, and its scientific expression the doctrine of evolution. Moreover, this self-manifestation is thought of as an eternal process. This appeals to the modern mind more than the Christian doctrine of a sudden beginning of creation. Again, according to some presentations of this doctrine, this manifestation of God has no fixed goal, nor fixed forms. No definite laws regulate its course, no general statements can with certainty be predicated of it. Each particular manifestation of the one life has its individual character of which we cannot predicate entire conformity to any general principle or law. Reality is a vast organism with an infinite variety of manifestations, which cannot be accurately dissected and systematized. All general statements are but approximations, convenient ways to help our apprehension in its grasp of experience. But they are no more than this. Life defies system and analysis,

the particular experience in its reality escapes the grasp of general concepts.[1] This latter characteristic of Pantheism is indeed by no means so universal or so marked as the former (the dynamic) character. Nevertheless, this vagueness and agnosticism as regards the general, and preoccupation with particulars, as if each were *sui generis*, is present *in many forms* of this modern Monism.

This more individual form of Pantheism will, in my belief, prevail, is actually prevailing, over more static Absolutisms or Monisms. Some indeed of the leading advocates of this anti-intellectualism, e.g. M. Bergson, are not complete Monists; but the real tendency of their doctrine is, I think, in this direction. An anti-conceptualist Monism may well be the predominant philosophy of the immediate future.

B. Modern thought is vague. Here Pantheism exactly suits itself to the modern mind. It has no dogmas, no definitions, no elaborate theology. Its appeal is to experience, to the religious sense. Pantheism scarcely asks of us to study arguments, to weigh evidence, to think accurately. Rather it would have us listen to our hearts, to the voice of external nature, and above all to our instincts. From these sources we undoubtedly receive feelings of spiritual power, of soul life within and without us. These feelings or experiences Pantheism would have us regard as experiences of the One Being who is at once our inner soul and the world of nature without, who becomes both, who develops Himself in both. Pantheism cares not what formulæ are employed in the description of this experience, or what name we give to this Being. All names, all formulæ, are for her inadequate ciphers, signs of an essentially incomprehensible and indescribable experience. Whether reality be called God, the Infinite,

[1] There is, of course, as we have seen, much truth in this view; but, as has also been pointed out, it is exaggerated by modern thought. Pantheism adapts itself, not alone to the truth, but to the exaggeration also.

the Absolute, the World Soul, or simply Reality, or Life, that matters not—names are but sounds; to have felt, to have realized, is all. This is a presentation of religion attractive not solely to the vast number who prefer vague feeling to accurate thought, but to those nobler spirits who are so conscious of the infinity and of the incomprehensibility of Reality, that they are tempted to despair of all religious formulæ and to believe that dogmas and creeds, instead of interpreting our religious experience, serve only to limit and to degrade it.

C. Modern thought is relative in its view of truth. In the literal sense Pantheism cannot wholly gratify this tendency, since to be itself it must of course believe in the absolute truth of its view of reality. Apart, however, from this one doctrine as to the nature of reality as one Being, it needs no other absolute truth. All experience may be regarded as relative, as the manifestation *to us* of the One Being. We need not believe that our experience gives us knowledge of the nature of that Being, but only that our experience of this Being is thus, and not otherwise. Of course that Spiritualistic Monism which is rightly termed Pantheism, and which alone can so appeal to the religious instincts of man, as to become a future competitor with Catholicism, would further require us to believe that the spiritual side of our experience did to some degree represent the character of the One; that is, of absolute Reality. Furthermore, we should also need to believe that the spiritual element of experience more truly represented Reality, i.e. revealed its inmost nature better than the material element.

Yet, after all, the amount of absolute truth here claimed is far less than that demanded by Catholicism.

D. Modern thought is dominated by the conception of natural law, and necessity is opposed to free-will and miracles.

Pantheism knows nothing of free-will, for everything is the inevitable self-manifestation of the One, nor of miracles, since there is no God or supernatural order distinct from nature to overrule the working of physical laws.

E. Pantheism of course is itself an example of excessive unification, as the name Monism clearly expresses. Everything in the universe is a manifestation of one identical Reality underlying all. Matter, life, sentience, intelligence—all are manifestations at various levels of one and the same Substance. The distinction between Natural and Supernatural becomes meaningless, for everything is equally Divine and the natural as Divine as that which has wrongly, indeed blasphemously, been termed supernatural. Evolution is perfectly continuous from atom and force to Saint and sage—the unfolding of the one underlying reality. In this Pantheistic-Monism the philosophic ideal of complete unification of the manifold is, it is claimed, fully achieved. Idealistic Absolutism at one end of the scale, Hæckel's Materialistic Monism at the other (the black shadow which dogs the steps of Pantheism) agree in this complete unification. Even Pragmatic Pluralism is apparently being forced back upon a Monism of Pure Experience—a sentience which is the one ultimate Reality underlying the entire complexus of phenomena.

F. Modern thought idealizes liberty and will have nothing of Church authority. To this tendency also Pantheism holds out an open hand. Pantheism knows nothing of a church and her *de fide* dogmas. It believes in no revelation that is binding on man to receive. Rather does it rest its claim, as we have seen, on the personal experience of each individual. Only give a patient and candid hearing to your own experience, and you will be conscious of the Deity within and without you. This is her appeal,—an appeal to private judgment, an appeal to the individual to interrogate his own experience and to believe his own experience, not the word of any external teacher.

G. Modern ethical thought favours an all-round self-realization. Pantheism has nothing to oppose to this ethical ideal. On the contrary, it favours it and is anti-ascetic. Since it teaches that everything is essentially part of the One Deity, of whom it is a manifestation, God can be found as well in matter and physical life as in the spiritual life; and the secular activities are as sacred as the distinctively religious activities. But indeed for Pantheism there are no distinctively religious activities, save perhaps the apprehension of the One Reality in all things, even as there is no material being that is not an aspect of God. The necessary conclusion is that all that is, is good, not only in the correct meaning of this dictum, but in a sense that admits of no undue privation anywhere. Everything partakes of Deity—everything is good with the Divine goodness. Not only is asceticism excluded by Pantheism, but sin also, that sombre reality which so many to-day would fain believe to be naught but an ecclesiastical scarecrow no longer needed in these enlightened days; indeed, long since discredited. All that happens, human conduct included, is the necessary manifestation of the One. The adherents of Pantheism, however, are forced to recognize struggle and pain and defect in this manifestation. Hence Pantheism must alternate between a false optimism and utter pessimism. One of the two extremes it must adopt, since any kind of dualism is excluded. The moderns who usually adopt the optimistic view therefore reject asceticism as a vain attempt to cut oneself off from the fulness of Divine life manifested in all things. Both schools reject sin in the Catholic sense as a mere figment.

Monism, therefore, makes a peculiar appeal to the modern Zeitgeist. But, indeed, Monism is adapted to the modern Zeitgeist, because it is the creation of that Zeitgeist. It is the result of the inter-action of the seven factors constitutive of that Zeitgeist. It is possible to indicate shortly the process by which the seven forces above discussed have

built up the Monism which we have to face. First came the Renaissance and brought with it the demand for freedom from the restraints of asceticism, and even of the moral law. Then followed the Reformation which strove after freedom from the authority, first of the Church, then of authoritative teaching of any kind. The development of physical science brought with it the notion of all-pervading law and necessity; in other words a mechanical explanation of the universe which issued in the anti-miraculous Deism of the eighteenth century. This in turn led to the tendency to over-unification, as witness the famous words of Laplace, "I have no need of that hypothesis" (namely, of a Divine Creator). This over-unification was accentuated by the Darwinian theory of evolution. In defiance of the sound philosophic axiom that the effect cannot contain more than its causes, evolution was regarded as an explanation of the higher by the lower. The principle of unification was material. Evolution also brought with it a more dynamic explanation of reality than had existed hitherto. The logical outcome of this excessive dynamism was relativism. If there was nothing fixed, there could be nothing absolute, and, therefore, no absolute truth. This relativism was encouraged by the empiricism of the school of Mill. Where relativism was the all-triumphant factor of thought, the result was, of course, agnosticism. Where its working was more controlled, the effect of the interaction of the forces which sprang from the first hasty interpretation of the results of physical science was a materialistic Monism; that is to say, materialism. Meanwhile the irrepressible idealism of the human soul sought to take refuge from the onslaughts of materialistic science in a vague sentimentalism that defied logic. Thus arose the modern vagueness. This vagueness in turn ministered to the desire for ethical and intellectual freedom from restraint and authority. But it also had affinity with the dynamism which rejects the fixed and the determinate, and still more with the relativism which denies the absolute truth of

any predication. Thus religious sentiment was ready to adopt two of the four tendencies of thought due to physical science. Nor need the spiritualist find any difficulty in accepting the absolute dominance of physical law and necessity, now that miracles had been rejected in the company of fixed dogma. Free-will could not indeed be abandoned so lightly, but even there a *modus vivendi* might be found by explaining free-will with M. Bergson as some sort of natural spontaneity inherent in life. The way to reconciliation now lay open. The unifying principle by which reality is to be explained was for the materialistic monist a material somewhat. If only this somewhat could be regarded as spiritual, the spiritualist would gladly accept the unification. Now the materialist had already to allow that his material first principle gave rise under certain conditions to epiphenomena of a spiritual nature. Was it not more reasonable after all to regard this first principle as possessed in itself of a spiritual nature at least under one aspect? This first principle might be considered as a somewhat which was common to matter and spirit alike, and of which both matter and spirit were manifestations. Of these two manifestations it was obvious that spirit, as possessing a higher grade of being than matter, must be nearer to the true nature of the unknown common substance. This unknowableness would also propitiate the extreme relativist; that is, the agnostic. This reconciliation would be all the easier now that vitalism is superseding mechanism as the fundamental hypothesis of biological science.

A spiritualistic Monism would, in the opinion of its supporters, reconcile the demands of the religious sense with the results of science, and it certainly satisfies the exaggerated and unbalanced tendencies which have built up the modern Zeitgeist. Even such a Monism have these tendencies united to produce. In this Monism does the Zeitgeist behold its child, and the parent blesses and will bless its offspring.

SECTION XXV.

The Exaggerations and One-sidedness of Pantheism are more superficially Attractive than the Completeness of Catholicism.

All these tendencies, as we have already seen, contain some truth; have a good, a positive element, and are false only in their one-sidedness ; that is their defect. To this truth correspond truths contained in Pantheism; to this good, this positive element, answers the good, the positive element of Pantheism. It is in this correspondence of the good and true in both, that the strength of Pantheism will lie. It is in virtue of the truth contained in them, that these tendencies of modern thought are so powerful. It is the virtue of its truth, not of its error, that Pantheism has attracted, does attract, and, I believe, will hereafter attract many good men and deep thinkers, unprivileged by the gift of Catholic faith.

This indeed is always certain, that nothing lives or grows in virtue of its bad or negative side, but in virtue of its positive side, through the truth, through the good it contains, never through the falsehood, through the evil. It may then perhaps seem strange that Pantheism, whose truth is so partial, should gratify these tendencies, more than Catholicism, which in its whole truth includes the partial truth of the former. The reason is, I think, that in the complete teaching of Catholicism, each aspect or element in it is less prominent on the surface, than it is when it comprises the whole religious teaching. Therefore many will see in Pantheism the partial truth that appeals

to them, when they fail to see it in Catholicism, because it is there united with other and complementary truths. The one-sidedness of their tendencies of thought and feeling makes them alive only to those aspects of truth to which they are attracted, and therefore a partial system which consists of this one-sided truth alone has greater appeal to such than an entire system in which this one side is but one side, and no more. For a man under the influence of the tendencies, above indicated, to perceive the truth of Catholicism, it would be necessary for him to correct and supplement those tendencies. Pantheism gratifies them, as they are, and them alone. Moreover, the aspect of Catholicism which corresponds to the truth in Pantheism is neither the most obvious aspect nor the most popular. It is, on the contrary, the mystical aspect, the aspect least known and realized among Catholics themselves. If the true satisfaction offered by Catholicism to modern religious needs and tendencies is to have a fair field against the partial and one-sided but very obvious satisfaction offered by Pantheism, this mystical element must be placed in the forefront of Catholic apologetic.

SECTION XXVI.

Two Difficulties raised by Catholicism which are Absent from Pantheism. (1) *Free Creation out of Nothing.* (2) *The Existence of Finite Beings essentially Distinct from the Infinite.*

Of this, however, I would speak later. First, I would call attention to two difficulties in Catholicism, that do not appear in Pantheism, and so far favour the latter.

(1) Catholicism demands our belief in a definite creation out of nothing at God's free will. This, however, gives rise to a twofold difficulty. Why should a wholly self-sufficient Deity create an external universe, and if at all, why at one particular time, rather than at another? This difficulty was strongly felt by Cardinal Newman.[1] Pantheism on the other hand regards the universe as the necessary and eternal self-manifestation of God, and so avoids the difficulty. I fully grant that the difficulty is an insoluble one, but then we should expect so great a difficulty to be insoluble, to be a mystery. It involves, however, no contradiction, and by its denial Pantheism is faced with other difficulties at least equally insoluble. A God in any way dependent on creation would not be the Deity demanded by the deepest needs of the religious sense of mankind. This demands rather a wholly transcendent God—in Himself all-perfect and all-sufficing. Reason, moreover, supports this demand: All the philosophic arguments for the existence of God are conclusive against a Pantheistic Deity, who is identical with his creation. Among men the lowest are those who are most dependent on things of an inferior order to themselves—the highest

[1] *Discourses to Mixed Congregations.* Discourse 13.

those dependent on God alone, and independent of and indifferent to created things. But God can from the nature of the case have no higher Being to be dependent upon. Therefore He must be completely independent of everything external to Himself. To deny this, because we cannot conceive how He could create for no increase of good to Himself (though it was for good *quoad nos* and all other creatures) is to fall into the error above mentioned of denying elements of truth—because our reason cannot perfectly harmonize them. Moreover, as St. Augustine points out (*Confessions*, Bk. XI, § 12, sqq.), God did not create the universe in time, but created time itself in the eternal now, where there is no before nor after.

(2) How can there be finite beings side by side with an infinite Being? Must not all being be part of Infinite Being? Here again we are indeed face to face with a mystery, but here also denial leads to difficulties equally great. At least we know that our being is not being *by comparison* with the fulness of the Divine Being, so that the creation of the finite being in no way added to the sum of being which was eternally Infinite in God. Moreover, God in the Perfection and Infinity of His Absolute Being already contained *eminently* the relative, dependent and finite being of creatures. We know also that the existence of the finite creature in no way limits or excludes the Infinite Creator. Pantheism, on the other hand, involves the ascription to the Creator of the limitations of the creature.

Nevertheless these two difficulties, or rather more truly these two mysteries, must be counted among the factors that make for the success of Pantheism.

SECTION XXVII.

The Especial Attraction of Pantheistic Unification.

But perhaps the most powerful attraction of Pantheism for the more intellectual lies in its extreme unification spoken of above. Against this attraction may be urged all that I said above in discussing the excessive unification of modern thought (*vide* Section XVIII). The apologist will also do well to point out that the most complete unity conceivable would be a unity without internal differentiation of any kind. This, however, is excluded by undeniable facts. If then the unity of reality admits of phenomenal differences, why not also of noumenal or essential difference? Of course, if there were no unifying principle in reality whatever, then would reality indeed be incomprehensible. Such a principle of unity exists, however, in the Catholic view of reality. God is the Creator of matter and spirit alike, and all creation is but a reflection of His Being, Though God be not Himself material, all that is in matter is in God eminently. Of, in and through Him are all things. Need for further unity there is surely none, other than that presented by the two difficulties above mentioned. Pantheism, however, escapes from these only to present other difficulties more and more intolerable than these. Such difficulties make Pantheism untenable, and should be insisted upon by the apologist.

It is moreover important to point out, that the one-sidedness of Pantheism must for ever prevent it from affording a permanent satisfaction to the religious needs of man.

SECTION XXVIII.

Pantheism presents an Inadequate and Degraded Conception of the Deity, and fails to Satisfy the Religious Needs and Aspirations of Humanity.

PANTHEISM preaches God immanent, but denies God transcendent. It therefore identifies God with the creature. Consequently the weakness and the limitations of the creature are by Pantheism transferred to the Creator, since of necessity He manifests Himself in these weak and limited forms. On the other hand, though in the doctrine of the Incarnation the Church teaches us that God became man, His Divinity nevertheless did not, and could not, become manhood, but remained in its Infinite Distinctness of Nature from the created Nature with which It had entered into hypostatic union. Thus, while Pantheism thinks to glorify man by making him divine, she has but made God human, unable to raise man, because Himself no more than man. In this aspect it is that religion of humanitarianism, that worship of man as God, which Mgr. Benson imagines dominant in his novel *The Lord of the World.* Such a religion of humanity is by no means confined to the realm of imagination, but makes itself heard in such utterances as that of Campbell's *New Theology.* "Jesus was God, but so are we." Man feels within him a longing to be raised to union with the Divine. This demand of the human soul Pantheism would meet by telling him, that he is already of his nature, divine. Such a doctrine, however, avails but to degrade the divine to the

human, and to deny the existence of an essentially superhuman Deity, to union with Whom humanity may by His grace be raised. Again, Pantheism would fain glorify the material by declaring its essential oneness with spirit. Instead, spirit becomes essentially materialized in so far as, in one aspect, it is, according to this doctrine, material. To assert the unity of the lower with the higher, is as much to degrade the latter, as to raise the former. Moreover, man feels within himself a consciousness of sin, and a need for redemption from sin. Sin is not only made necessary by Pantheistic teaching, but is moreover ascribed to God, being a necessary part of God's self-manifestation. But the religious consciousness above all demands a perfectly holy God, the source and ideal of all that is pure and good in the human soul. A God necessarily connected with moral evil is opposed to this religious consciousness.

Human history is often regarded by Pantheists as a struggle in which the Divine Being strives to realize Himself fully, and is doing this more and more perfectly. Then God is certainly imperfect and finite, for otherwise He would have perfectly realized Himself from the outset. Such a finite God is, however, opposed to the religious instincts of man and more especially to that very experience of the infinite on which Pantheism rests. Moreover, a struggle implies something to struggle against, and Pantheism admits of naught outside God. There is therefore a self-contradiction inherent in Pantheism. Moreover, we have no certainty that the struggle will end in complete success, for we cannot know how powerful God really is, if once we deny His omnipotence. Yet again, the individual without free-will may well be doomed from the outset to moral failure. Indeed, Pantheism, as it denies the hope of personal immortality that lies so deep in the human soul, denies also the hope of attaining the good and happiness which man must inevitably seek. In fact, personality itself is destroyed, since the individual is but a manifestation of another Being, who lives and works

through him. Pantheism can give no satisfactory account of that individuality and self-initiative of which we are empirically conscious. I think that enough has been said to show that, whatever superficial attraction Pantheism may present, it is both wholly unable to give a consistent account of experience, and is also in great measure opposed to the religious consciousness.

SECTION XXIX.

Need to oppose to Pantheism the Mystical Element of Catholicism.

Catholic apologetic has therefore good hope of success against this dangerous foe, if, on the one hand, these and other defects of Pantheism are exposed, and, on the other hand, that element of Catholic belief which corresponds to the truth of Pantheism is brought out prominently before the modern world. This element is, as we saw, the mystical element. Mysticism attracts the religious thought of to-day; mysticism, falsely understood, is favouring Pantheism; mysticism, truly interpreted, will prove the best and most powerful apologetic. While preaching first and foremost the supernatural mysticism which is directly effected in the soul by the transcendent experience of God, we must not slight or deny that lower natural mysticism which, misunderstood, has so often led to Pantheism; This natural mysticism is, I believe, the experience of God through nature, or the experience of God immanent. Mediately, *but only mediately*, it apprehends Him as transcendent; its immediate object is God Immanent. I know that this view of natural mysticism will seem to many Catholics too high. Catholics have generally been disposed to treat this natural mysticism as a mere feeling that all nature is a Divine work—not as any kind of direct experience of God.[1] If, however, we will but afford a candid and impartial hearing to the accounts of their experience given

[1] *Vide* A. B. Sharpe, *Mysticism: its True Nature and Value*, chap. i, p. 14 sqq.

us by such nature mystics as Wordsworth, and still more Richard Jefferies, it will, I think, be hard to deny the existence of this direct apprehension of God present in nature.[1] In Richard Jefferies this experience is so strong that it compels him while under its influence to assert the existence of God the Infinite Spirit, and personal Immortality, doctrines which his ordinary intellectual conviction outside this experience denied.[2] I know of no dogma of faith to hinder such recognition, a recognition which seems to be as much demanded by empirical fact, as the recognition by our opponents of the truth of supernatural mysticism.[3] If we recognize this nature mysticism, we are able to provide the due key.

The nature mystic, deprived of Catholic faith, often misinterprets his experience of the Divine immanent in material nature as an experience of the Divinity of that material nature. Thus he is misled into Pantheism, and thus also the outside world comes to accept the experience of such nature mystics (often also great poets or thinkers), as witnessing to the truth of Pantheism.

This evil will surely best be met by the acceptance and true interpretation of this nature mysticism now so highly valued. At the same time the apologist will of course bring into prominence that supernatural mysticism which forms

[1] Wordsworth, *passim*, esp. *Lines Written above Tintern Abbey*, and *Prelude*, pp. 4, 15 and sqq.; *Excursion*, Bk. I, 210–235. *Vide* Richard Jefferies, cf. *The Story of My Heart* (*passim*), esp. pp. 5, 6, 10, 13, 15, 17, 20, 27–8, 38–9, 40, 43, 44–5, 46–7). See also Miss Spurgeon, *Mysticism in English Literature*.

[2] Perhaps, even, I think most probably, Jefferies was also a transcendental supernatural mystic. His account of his experiences almost compels the honest reader to this belief. Perhaps God, Whose Spirit bloweth where it listeth, gave this gift to an unbeliever for the utter confounding of nineteenth century materialism. In any case, Jefferies was also a nature mystic.

[3] I here use the term natural in the sense of mediated through nature, supernatural to mean that God directly reveals Himself to the soul above and without material nature. Another term to express this would be supermaterial, though this also would require careful explanation, in so far as all mystical experience is spiritual, even if sometimes mediated through matter.

the subject-matter of mystical theology, and will insist on its higher value and deeper truth. Thus will Pantheism, which rests so largely on mysticism misunderstood, be met by the preaching of mysticism as truly interpreted by Catholic theology. Thus also will those elements of Catholicism be brought forward, which especially attract modern thought, while at the same time will be clearly shown their essential connection with other less congenial elements of the Faith.

SECTION XXX.

Renewed Appeal for Interpretation.

CATHOLICISM contains all the truth both of Pantheism and all other-isms that ever have been or will be. While pointing out the errors of any false system that may be popular, let us not forget to recognize its truth and to shew how that truth is already stored in our own treasure house. The modern world is alienated from the faith and even contemptuous of the faith, largely because it does not understand the faith. The modern man tends to see in Catholicism only the outward, and to be blind to the inward, or if he does see it, to separate it from the faith as a whole. Moreover, he sees it in only what is most opposed to his thought and feeling, and is blind to what is congenial. Again then I would urge, let us not fear, but pity; let us not denounce, but explain. Let us show him that all his deepest needs are satisfied by Catholicism alone, that in Catholicism is entire, what elsewhere is partial, and that whatever he has found of good without the Church, is found a hundredfold within the Church. In other words, these remarks on Catholic apologetic end as they began, with an appeal for interpretative apologetic as of paramount importance in this coming age when men the world over, sick of materialism and naturalism, are seeking rest for their souls, a rest to be found in the Church alone, and only so found, if the Church and her teaching are known as they really are.

SECTION XXXI.

Remarks on External Means of Apologetical Propaganda: Journalism, Lectures, The Novel.

Nor must this interpretative apologetic be confined to bulky scientific tomes and to learned monographs. On the contrary, we must use the instruments of teaching now so powerful. The newspaper press is of course in itself the worst possible theatre for so serious a subject as religious apologetic. Since, however, it is, alas! a widely used and powerful weapon of attack, we must use it also for defence. The importance of Press apologetic, especially of the more concrete and particular type, has of late been much insisted upon by our authorities. So I pass it over here. Public lectures are another modern method of instruction, that also may be turned to account. The apologetic of the novel is already well on its way. In France there have been and are several distinguished Catholic novelists, and in England Mgr. Benson has done much work in this direction. So of this also, I need say nothing, save to express a hope for the continuance, and the extension of this form of apologetic.

SECTION XXXII.

The Apologetic of the Drama.

What, however, I most wish to emphasize is the need and value of dramatic apologetic. Not so long ago the theatre was devoted almost wholly to amusement, or at most to the exercise of literary art pure and simple. Of late it has become an active teacher. Problems of the deepest significance, of the most fundamental importance, and most especially moral and social problems, are discussed through the medium of the drama. Unhappily the answers to these problems given by these dramatic teachers are nearly always opposed to the answers given by Catholicism.

Orthodoxy of belief, orthodoxy of moral principles and conduct are attacked, ridiculed, and associated with all that is narrow-minded, hateful and mean. Shall we not then employ against the enemy a weapon so powerful? Shall we, can we, let our case go by default in the tribunal of drama? Is one of the most influential pulpits or teaching chairs of our time to be abandoned to infidelity? So far, alas! this has been the case, but the defect may yet be supplied. We ought to aim at a Catholic drama. I do not mean merely a drama that does not offend against Catholic faiths and morals, but a drama that positively defends the cause of Catholicism. This would be done by the treatment from a Catholic standpoint of those ethical and moral problems now so commonly discussed on the stage. For example, we might have a drama about apostasy, a psychological presentation of the fall of a gifted

and in many respects noble character from the faith. Such a drama would show how this was due to moral fault. Again, we might have a drama portraying the conquest of inherited tendencies to moral evil by the use of free-will aided by religious belief. Another drama might show how a woman finds inward happiness, and attains to true nobility by fidelity to an utterly unworthy husband. A Catholic drama on these lines would be no insignificant part of the interpretative apologetic for which I plead. I do not forget the obvious difficulty that dramatists cannot be made to order. Certainly to write such drama well we should need a Catholic Ibsen to face the great protagonist of this modern unbelieving problem-drama. Lesser men, however, can always do their part, since they can answer the efforts of the smaller fry on the opposite side. Moreover, we have God's grace with us Catholics, and through that great success may well be granted even to small men. Nay, further, can we doubt that the God who has so often sent to His Church defenders in the fields alike of speculation and of action is able to raise up, if so He will, a Catholic in literary genius and in motive power fully the equal of Ibsen? It is for the apologist to keep this need before the minds of the educated laity that some among us may come forward to supply it.

I have spoken at especial length of this dramatic method of apology, because it does not as yet exist, nor has the need for such apologetic been brought forward.

SECTION XXXIII.

The "Drama of Redemption"; The Liturgy.

WHILE speaking of the drama as a means of apologetic, I cannot be silent as to that which is at once the greatest drama ever devised, and at the same time the most pleading apologetic. I mean, of course, that "year long dramatic action," as Pater has aptly termed it,[1] the drama of Redemption—in other words, the liturgy of the Church. Newman well said that, if Protestants but knew the Breviary, they could not think so ill of the Church that devised a prayer so beautiful. Non-Catholics have indeed often loved, often also imitated the rites and ceremonies of our Church. Every need of the human soul is there expressed, and finds there besides expression, satisfaction. Every sort of worship ever devised by the human spirit has its purified analogue in our liturgy. Truth is expressed in beauty equivalent, inexhaustible depths of meaning are contained in the hallowed words and actions. In the liturgy, deep indeed calls to deep, the deep of the human heart to the deep of the Divine Being, revealed therein now in one, now in another of His attributes. The *lex credendi* is set forth in a *lex orandi* so persuasive that it must needs conciliate all who have eyes open to the beauty of holiness. In the very passage quoted above Pater speaks of it thus: "All those various 'offices' which in Pontifical, Missal and Breviary, devout imagination had elaborated from age to age with such a depth of spiritual idea and light and shade, with so much poetic

[1] *Gaston de Latour*, p. 31, 2.

tact in quotation, such a depth of insight into the Christian soul, had joined themselves harmoniously together in this perpetual worship of the Mother of Churches."[1] But even those glowing words are cold to the reality. Indeed, I should almost dare to say, did the Church lack any other credentials whatever, her Divinity would be proved by her liturgy alone. Only the Holy Spirit could have accomplished a work so marvellous. Yet, alas! this best of apologetics is now sadly neglected. Catholics despise what non-Catholics would fain possess. Vernacular devotions worthy of a negro revival meeting have largely ousted the office from our Churches, and even High Mass is often thought too long. In the passage above quoted, Pater is speaking of Chartres Cathedral. To-day, I am told, the liturgy is almost silent in that noble pile, which is given over to endless catechizing—which, though doubtless an indispensable work, could be performed as well in a large hall. But I need not say more. The facts speak all too plainly. I would only raise my voice here to urge all who wish to convert the unbelievers to Christ, not to cast aside the best of all arguments,—the most moving of all appeals,—the liturgy. Here the non-Catholic will find the dogmas of our faith already turned into music for his ear, and will feel, almost willy-nilly, that each dogma, mystery and attribute of God is not only real but necessary to the interpretation of his deepest experience. Every argument I have touched upon in this work is brought home to us in the liturgy. Our Holy Father, by his reform of the Breviary and of Church Music, has led the way in the presentation of this liturgical apologetic. Let us not fail to follow his leading,—the clergy by providing liturgical services, the laity by attending them when provided. We need the apologetic of the drama in every form, and in the liturgy we possess this dramatic apology in its highest and most hallowed expression.

[1] *Gaston de Latour*, p. 31, 2.

SECTION XXXIV.

The Apologetic of the Opera.

We have seen above that music is the art that in our time has reached the greatest perfection and is most esteemed. Through music has been expressed what could not be expressed through any other artistic medium. This is in great measure the result of Wagner's operas. The Church has long made use of music in her various forms. Can she not also employ this modern music? Can there be no sacred operas? It would certainly be difficult to use the scenes of our Lord's life thus, since reverence would forbid the setting of songs in His mouth. Such an objection, however, would not hold against Old Testament operas, or operas based on the lives of saints. If among Catholics a great musical composer should be discovered, he might well compose operas in which the music in combination with the dramatic treatment would express Catholic religious ideas. An opera, for example, based on the life of St. Alexius, or on that of St. Agnes, might display the triumph of supernatural love over temptation, hardship and persecution; its purity, its nobleness, and its glory as contrasted with human love (in the life of St. Alexius with pure human love, in that of St. Agnes with ignoble and impure human love). In *Tannhaüser* and still more in *Parsifal*, Wagner himself *half-unconsciously expressed* the Christian ideal, and in so far as he did so, he became a Christian apologist. Indeed, Nietzsche felt so strongly this tendency in Wagner's later work, that he regarded Wagner as an apostate to the cause of free thought, and broke off his

friendship with him. Such opera has surely the possibility of a powerful apologetic for fundamental Christian ideas, for it would display their true nature by the medium of soul-dominating music. It is at least an ideal worth keeping before musically gifted Catholics, if perchance a composer with sufficient genius might arise among them. I do not, however, think that this musical apologetic is so important as dramatic apologetic in the stricter sense, as the opera has not become so directly a pulpit as has the non-musical theatre. The dramatist to-day preaches far more plainly and openly than the composer.

Nor is there any reason why we should object to such methods as these. In the Middle Ages when the Church shaped the civilization of Europe, she employed in her service all that was best in the thought and art of the age. If the Church is to use the best of our own age also, she must make use of forms of art then unknown. By so doing Catholics will be faithful to the spirit of the great mediæval past, whereas if they stick to the letter of the past, they will be false to the spirit.

SECTION XXXV.

Scientific Apologetic: Catholic Institutes at Universities.

Of course behind all such popular methods of propaganda as are these of which I have spoken, must lie the solid scientific apologetic without which the more popular is of little worth.

One of the best methods of securing this erudite apologetic would be the establishment of Catholic Institutes at universities. In these universities research work would be carried on, lectures would be given, unbelief would be combated in its nurseries and centres, and living schools of Catholic philosophy would grow up in touch with the intellectual life of the age, and therefore able to carry on the work of interpretation for which I am pleading.

The apologetic of the lecture room, of the pamphlet, of the novel, of the press, and of the drama will bring the Catholic position before the general public, will make them realize that Catholicism is no outworn system of hair-splitting and unreal dogmas, but a living Reality, as living to-day as at its foundation two thousand years ago, as able to answer all the difficulties and needs of man in our twentieth century, as those of the subjects of the Roman Empire in the first century. When the attention and respect of the modern unbeliever are thus gained, he will be ready to give an attentive and fair-minded hearing to the scientific apologetic of Catholicism. The result of such a thorough and unprejudiced study will often, by God's grace, be his conviction and conversion.

SECTION XXXVI.

The Outlook: Fears and Hopes.

We have seen powerful tendencies at work in favour of Catholicism and other tendencies at least equally powerful at work against Catholicism. Chief among the favourable tendencies is the growing feeling of religious need, chief among the unfavourable is the growing desire for absolute individual freedom. This latter is especially powerful among the masses, who also feel least the religious reaction, since they are still under the influence of the materialism of the last century. In themselves the poor and the uneducated are the best disposed to receive the faith; alas! to-day they are half educated, and this half-education (given them at the will of the more educated) tends more and more to be godless in character. It is among these ill-led, half-educated people, filled with the delusive teachings of sceptics and socialist agitators, that infidelity finds its choicest field.[1] This false freedom in union with materialism has already succeeded, at least in the larger towns, in alienating vast numbers, if not the majority of the lower classes, from any form of Christianity. Pantheism has been already mentioned as a future rival of Catholicism for the adhesion of those who feel a personal need for religion. Among the masses, led astray by this false ideal of liberty and by a desire for an

[1] It is, I hope, needless to say that when I speak later of the higher few and lower many, the primary reference is to true education. Wealth is in no sense considered, and birth only in so far as it is the inheritance of true nobility.

earthly Paradise, as indeed among the money-hunting and gold-greedy in all classes, such Pantheism would only be received, if at all, in its lowest form. A cloak of vague religious language and feeling would be cast about earthly goods and physical pleasures. In other words, the Monism would be a Monism in which the material was honoured as though it were spiritual, and the truly spiritual neglected. The general acceptance of a Monism or Pantheism spiritually understood among the higher few, materially understood, and thus but a coloured materialism among the lower many, is certainly among the possibilities of the future. On the other hand Pantheism may be on the whole confined to the few, while undisguised materialism prevails among the many. If these irreligious influences triumph, we shall be faced with a godless world.

If the need, not alone for religion, but for a truly satisfying religion, prevails, then we may a second time enjoy a religious and Church-directed civilization. I must, however, admit that I do not myself believe that such a triumph is, humanly speaking, in the least probable. Individualism, as was above pointed out, will prevent wholesale conversions. Moreover, the irreligious tendencies are enormously strong, and among the *poorer* as opposed to the more educated *classes* are growing stronger and stronger. Perhaps these destructive forces may achieve a complete triumph, and overwhelm modern civilization in a flood of anarchy. This terrible result seems to me by no means impossible.[1] Then, however, we might indeed hope that so fearful an outcome of irreligion would teach the impossibility of a godless society. Then, likely enough, out of the ruins of the old civilization would arise a new civilization, once more truly Christian and Catholic. In these

[1] I may seem here to adopt a more pessimistic outlook than I did at the opening of this Essay. My gaze was then, as indeed through the greater part of this work, fixed predominantly on the educated classes. Now I have the uneducated classes in the foreground of my vision. It is the uneducated urban proletariat that is the dark shadow in the picture.

speculations, however, we must be content to note possibilities, without attempting any definite forecast. The forces at work are too complex to be calculated. Moreover, the yellow races are rapidly awakening from their secular sleep. No longer will they be able to believe their old creeds. Whether they will be content with irreligion, or turn to the true faith, who can tell? The negroid races need as yet scarcely be counted, but in this epoch of rapid change they also may suddenly become civilized. Their attitude towards religion is another x in the problem. Of one thing, at least, we may be sure, namely, that merely external and official religion is on its deathbed. The vast number who have hitherto in Catholic countries professed and practised the Faith in an external, indifferent fashion, because it was the national religion, will soon do so no more. It is a period of division, when we all stand at the parting of the ways. Numerically, Catholicism is likely enough to be weaker than it has been since the conversion of the Roman Empire. Materialism, or more probably a materialistic Monism, may perhaps spread widely among the half-educated populace. Nevertheless, those who remain will be true Catholics, Catholics of convinced understanding and zealous heart. We may expect many valuable conversions among the better educated who have already got well beyond materialism, as indeed in all classes of society, among those who are in character spiritual and idealistic, and, therefore, disposed to religion. A minority of the nobler and wiser is better than a majority who profess the faith merely because it is the religion of the country. Of course the loss of such is undeniably a great loss, and it is much to be deplored that religion no longer enjoys a strong social sanction and support. Nevertheless, a strong and zealous Catholic body, even if a minority, a body of men intelligent of their privileges, and at heart loyal and devout, is surely no mean goal of hope and effort. This, at least, we may look for, if only we are able to gather in the large and increasing numbers

who are pursuing spiritual and unworldly ideals, and who are seeking a religion that will satisfy alike the demands of the intellect and the aspirations of the soul. That we shall be able to achieve this, there is every reason to hope, if only we will so present our faith that such may understand its true meaning. Yes, great indeed is the hope and splendid the prize that lies to-day before a Catholic apologetic that is truly interpretative.

The main object of this essay has been to sketch the character and to insist on the necessity of this work of interpretation. It is a work that will reap a fruitful harvest. Such apologetic cannot fail of success.

Santa Barbara, California

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ST. LOUIS, MO.:
B. HERDER, PUBLISHER, 17, S. BROADWAY.

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AUTHOR WATKIN, E.I.

TITLE Some Thoughts on Catholic Apologetics

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